THE TRUTH and EXCELLENCE OF THE Christian Religion, WITH THE CORRUPTIONS and ADDITIONS OF THE ROMISH CHURCH.

A Discourse,

Wherein the Pre-eminence of Christianity is demonstrated above the Religion of *Jews* or Heathens; and the Contradiction of Popery to its main Articles: And that Religion prov'd in many Instances to be a mixture of Heathenish Superstitions, and Jewish Ceremonies.

With a short Vindication of Christian Loyalty: And a brief Historical Account of Romish Treasons and Usurpations, since the Reformation.

By a hearty Professor of Reformed Catholick Christianity.

Published for the Benefit of those that have not leisure to read larger Volumes.

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To the Honourable Sir *Thomas Roberts*, Knight and Baronet of *Glassenbury* in *Kent*.

SIR,

HAVING *been for some time no uncompassionate observer of the strangely unnatural heats, and angry Unchristian jars of Protestants one with another; I was willing to divert my thoughts from so melancholly a Scene, and direct my Zeal against those more dangerous Enemies of our Peace, Popery and Irreligion. I was willing to call off my*

Native Country-men from biting and devouring one another, to unite against those potent Adversaries, which are coming in upon us, through those wide Breaches our Divisions have made. And methinks, if men would but give themselves leave to consider how their hot Disputes about Trifles, expose their Religion to the scorn of the Hectoring Atheists, and Derision of the bold Incendiaries of Rome; *they would be less eager about Circumstances and Modes of Worship, and more industrious in an unanimous Defence of the common Principles of Christianity.*

I know many excellent Worthies have labour'd before me in this Argument, and adorn'd their Discourses with all the Beauties of Wit, Learning, and Eloquence; but yet, because Irreligion gains new Proselytes, and Rome *swells big with greater hopes of once more introducing its blind Superstitions*

perſitions into our Land, I have adventur'd at the ſame time, to vindicate the excellency of Chriſtianity againſt the Infidel, and arm my Countrey-men againſt the bold Corruptions of Rome; *and tho I am not able to bear the Helmet of* Saul, *and his weighty Coat of Mail be too heavy for my Shoulders; tho I pretend not to ſuch ſtrong Lines, and nervous Arguments, as have been produc'd by the great Defenders of the Chriſtian and Proteſtant Faith in our Age; Yet I know not, but a Sling and a Stone, even in the hand of a Stripling, may, by Divine Aſſiſtance in ſome meaſure prevent the increaſe of our Enemies, and confirm the ſtaggering among us, in the profeſſion, and practice of our Reform'd Religion.*

And when once I had reſolv'd to expoſe theſe Papers to the Cenſure of the World; I at the ſame time reſolv'd to make this publick acknowledgment

of

of the endearing Obligations you, Sir, have laid upon me. I must acknowledg the Present is too mean for so great a Person; and 'tis a Disparagement to so worthy a Name to prefix it before so inconsiderable a Piece; but your good Nature is such, that I hope your Affection will bribe your Judgment; and what your Reason disallows, your undeserv'd respect to the Author will not condemn.

I know, Sir, the usual Flattery of Dedicatory Epistles; *but know as well, that you hate the fawning of mean Parasites; and had rather be good, than be magnifi'd as such in the World; and tho I might expatiate in your due Praises, yet I will not so far trespass upon your Humility (that great Ornament of your Nature, as well as Religion) but rather turn my Panegyrick into Prayers, That greatness and real goodness may be in you conjoin'd; and the Nobility of your Birth may be equall'd by*

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the noble Endowments of your mind. Go on, Sir, in your hearty Zeal for God and Religion; and let your great Example prevent the boasts of the bold Hectors of this Age, That they have Proselyted all the Gentry of the Land. Let your Dependents and Neighbours be aw'd into Seriousness by your strictly holy life; and allure men into the practice of Religion, by your sincere compliance with the amiable Virtues it recommends. Let not the Infidel be able to say, That Religion is only fit for the Cells of melancholly Souls, and the retirements of the poor despised Men in Black, who make it their Trade and Profession; *but continue, Sir, a glorious instance, How well Religion becomes the most noble Souls; and that Virtue is the best accomplishment, and the highest badg of Honour. Continue, Sir, in your becoming-Zeal against Papal Corruptions, which so naturally tend to Debauchery*

and

and Irreligion. And if this Discourse may be any way useful for so excellent a purpose, I shall have great reason to bless God, for directing me to such a Subject, Who am

Honourable Sir,

Your Oblig'd, Humble,

Affectionate Servant,

S. C.

ACTS XVII. 6.

These that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also.

A Just Vindication of the Christian Religion from the impious Slanders of its professed Enemies, and covert practices of its pretended Friends, hath in all Ages of the Church, been a very necessary work. For tho our Religion be sufficiently attested, and God hath given convincing Evidences that it came from him; tho the excellency, and intrinsick worth of the Precepts, recommend it to the Approbation of all mankind. Tho the Doctrines it delivers are highly agreeable to the wisest Apprehensions of men, no way unbecoming a God to speak, or men to hear. Tho no Religion in the World was ever so admirably

ſitted to advance the intereſt of particular perſons, or promote the advantage of publick Societies; yet hath it been vilely miſrepreſented by its Adverſaries, and the malice of Earth and Hell hath been buſied in inventing lying Accuſations, to prevent its ſettlement and Propagation.

The bleſſed Author of it, was accus'd as a Blaſphemer and Impoſtor, tho he came upon the moſt admirable deſign; of promoting the happineſs of mankind, and laid down ſuch excellent Rules, as would certainly have fill'd the World with the bleſſings of a flouriſhing Peace, and laſting Proſperity; yet was he traduc'd as a Troubler of the World, and Seducer of the People: and tho he deſerv'd to be honoured with the moſt profound reſpect, and recompenc'd with the beſt rewards; yet had he no other Crown than one of Thorns; and no other Throne than a Croſs. And the ſame Spirit that murder'd their Lord, did appear alſo againſt his Diſciples and Followers. Whereever they went to Preach the Word of the Kingdom, they were ſtill perſecuted with the bold lies, and virulent ſlanders of their enraged Adverſaries. The Magiſtrates were excited to ſecure the publick Peace, againſt theſe pretended

tended Disturbers of it. And thus they boldly cry out in the Text, *Those that have turn'd the world upside down, are come hither also.*

For the better understanding which words, it will be necessary, briefly to reflect upon the Context.

Paul and *Silas*, having travell'd through many parts of *Asia*, publishing the Gospel; in this Chapter, are come to *Thessalonica*, where was a Synagogue of the *Jews*, and a mixture of Heathen *Greeks*, and those call'd devout, *i. e.* Proselytes of the Gate, that disown'd the Follies and Superstitions of the vulgar Heathen, worship'd one God, and complied with the seven Precepts of the Sons of *Noah*. St. *Paul* gives the preference to his own Nation, and according to his usual custom in other places, goes into the *Jewish* Synagogue, and for three successive Sabbaths, reason'd with them, and proves by their Law, That Jesus must be the expected *Messiah*. And his Arguments were so covincing, that he gain'd some converts among the *Jews*, and proselyted a numerous company of Religious *Greeks*. But those who remain'd obstinate in their infide-

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lity, being fill'd with rage, gathered together a Rabble of the baſer ſort, and tumultuouſly throng to the houſe of *Jaſon*, whoſe Gueſt St. *Paul* was, and would forcibly have drag'd the Apoſtles before the Civil Magiſtrate; but they having prudently declin'd their fury, *Jaſon* with ſome other Converts is hal'd before the Rulers of
v.6. the City, and accus'd as an Harbourer of Traytors, or at leaſt Diſturbers of the publick Peace. For they cry out,

Theſe that have turn'd the world upſide down, are come hither alſo: Whom Jaſon hath receiv'd.

Theſe) they ſpeak concerning the Apoſtles, theſe whom *Jaſon* hath receiv'd.

That have turn'd the world upſide down. The *Greek* word is, as I remember, us'd but once more in the *New Teſtament*, and there it is rendred *to trouble*, Gal. 5. 12. *I wiſh they were even cut off which trouble you*, i. e. unſettle your minds, and ſeek to pervert you by teaching that new Doctrine of Circumciſion, and keeping the Ceremonial part of *Moſes*'s Law. The word properly ſignifies to Diſorder, Diſquiet, and raiſe Con-

Confusion. So that the Accusation against the Apostles, may be understood either more Generally, or Particularly.

1. More Generally; So the Accusation may be, These that have disturb'd the World, by bringing in a new Religion, that have overturn'd the Ancient Religions; and, brought in new Doctrines, directly opposite to the former; as if they should have said, *They propagate new Principles, destructive of the Ancient Religion of us* Jews, *and customary rites of you* Gentiles; *they have in every place argued against that Law, which we are assured came down from Heaven; and laugh at that Worship which you account most sacred and venerable. They have not only created disturbance by this means, in other Cities; but with the same design,* are come hither also; *and therefore your duty to your Gods, obliges you to silence and restrain them; they indeed have escaped our hands, but we have brought these before you, who have given entertainment to their Persons in their Houses, and their Doctrines in their hearts.*

2. More Particularly, The Apostles may be here accus'd as disturbing the World, by teaching Doctrines of Rebellion and Sedition. Indeed as they brought in a new Religion, they might be accounted Authors

of Sedition, becauſe all Innovations were look'd upon as tending to unſettle the Peace of the State; but the more particular crime, of which they may here accuſe them, ſeems to be the immediate tendency of ſome of their Doctrines to Rebellion, and this is countenanc'd by the 7th verſe; *Theſe all do contrary to the decrees of* Ceſar, *ſaying there is another King, one Jeſus*; we may therefore ſuppoſe the charge of the *Jews*, to be manag'd after ſuch a manner as this. *Theſe that are the Peſts of Societies, and highly diſaffected to the eſtabliſh'd Government, Friends of Anarchy, and Enemies to* Ceſar; *that maintain rebellious Principles, and ſow Sedition wherever they come; that have caſt off all ſenſe of Allegiance, and teach others to renounce their Subjection to their Emperor; that will not obey the Laws themſelves, and perſwade others to refuſe their Obedience alſo, and preach up Subjection to another King, one Jeſus; theſe, as they have diſturb'd the Government in other Cities, ſo here alſo have they ſpread their Infection. Theſe are the men, theſe are their Principles; and whether they are worthy of reſtraint, judg ye.*

Thus do the malicious *Jews*, miſrepreſent the Doctrines of theſe Meſſengers of Peace; and Innocence it ſelf was not a ſufficient Guard againſt the Perſecution of their

their envenom'd Tongues. And, oh that I might say, concerning the whole Christian World at this day, that such an Accusation would be Slanderous against them, as well as the Apostles; but alas! the Groans and Sighs of *England*, as well as other Lands, gives too sad occasion to cry out, *These that have turn'd the world upside down, have come hither also.*

I shall speak to the words in both these senses, seeing they will well bear it, and are exactly suited to my design. In order to a more methodical Progress, I shall speak to four Generals.

1. Whether the Apostles did introduce a new Religion, different from what was before entertain'd in the World? and whether they had the Divine Commission to do so? For if they could produce the Warrant of God for what they did, they could not justly be blam'd or accus'd.

2. Whether the Apostles Doctrine tended to Rebellion?

3. Whether any professed Christians at this day, are justly liable to this charge in both senses?

4. I shall deduce such Inferences as naturally result from the whole Discourse.

1. Whether the Apostles did introduce a new Religion, and had a Commission from God to do so?

To this I answer affirmatively; Christ did institute, and his Apostles did publish a more perfect platform of Religion than was before existent in the World; but not without sufficient discoveries of Gods Approbation. In this sense; they did turn the World upside down; taught Doctrines contrary to the universally receiv'd Opinions of the *Gentiles*, and darling Traditions and Practises of the *Jews*. The Christian Religion did silence the *Pagan* Oracles where it prevail'd, and caus'd the Heathen *Dagons* to fall down before it; the carnal Ceremonies of the *Jews* were disus'd, and *Moses* was not able to stand before him, whom they call'd a Magician.

The Brutish rites of the Heathens were aboliſh'd at the appearance of Christianity; and the Light of the Gospel dispers'd the Shadows of the Law, and took off the vail from *Moses*. The Impurities of the Heathen, and Imperfection of the *Jewish* Worship, did render a more perfect Revelation of the Divine will very necessary; and this was the Province undertaken by our Saviour and his Apostles.

1. The

1. The Christian Religion hath given a more compleat discovery of the Nature of God, and the manner how he will be Worshipped

The Conceptions of the Heathens, concerning the Nature of God, were very gross and confus'd; and the Wise-men of *Athens* and *Rome*, were at continual jars and disagreement about his Attributes; and they entertain'd very lame and imperfect, and some blasphemous and unworthy Notions of him. They did indeed generally acknowledg there could be but one Supreme and Sovereign God; and of him, *Varro* tells us, they made no Images and Pictures at *Rome*, till 170 Years after the Building of that City; but afterwards they carv'd him out in Wood and Stone, and still worship'd inferior Deities with the same external reverence they paid to their *Jupiter*. To these they dedicated Temples, consecrated Altars, burnt large portions of Incense, and ador'd with the same outward expressions of Devotion; and thus they debased his Infinite Power, as if he needed a rabble of petty pigmy Deities to rule the World. To him the common people (being influenced by the tales of the wanton Poets) Ascrib'd the most enormous Vices, the Murders and Adulteries,

Sodomies

Sodomies and Rapes, which are related of *Jupiter* of *Crete*, were appli'd by them to him whom they call'd Supreme. And tho many Philoſophers entertain'd more refind Notions, yet they dared not contradict the vulgar Follies, without incurring the Odium of the Rabble, and join'd in the ſame Rites and vile Ceremonies, and obſerv'd the ſame Cuſtoms with them. Indeed among the common people reaſon was debas'd below common ſenſe; the idle Fables of their luſtful Poets, were readily receiv'd. *Ovids Metamorphoſis*, and *Homers Iliads*, and the Divine Theology of the great *Virgil*, were their Syſtems of Divinity. The vileſt of men, who deſerv'd publick Puniſhment on Earth, were ador'd as Gods in Heaven; and thoſe whoſe memories ought to be loath'd and deteſted, were reverenc'd with Divine Adoration; in ſome places they worſhip'd bruit Beaſts, Cows and Dogs were deifi'd, Serpents and Crocodiles were devoutly ador'd, Apes and Monkeys receiv'd their ſubmiſſive Proſtrations; ſo that it was very queſtionable, which were more ridiculous, the gods or their worſhippers. The Sun, Moon, and Stars, Rivers and Elements, the Fruits of their Trees, Flowers in their Gardens, Herbs in their Fields, and the vileſt inanimate

mate things in nature, were the objects of their religious worſhip; they paid a Divine Veneration to the Diſeaſes of their Bodies, the Paſſions of their Minds, and the Accidents of their Lives.

Nay, further, the curſed Fiends of Hell were treated with awful Reverence; and the ſworn Enemies to mankind had Temples and Altars conſecrated to their honour; thus vile were the Gods they ador'd, and the Rites wherewith they worſhip'd them, were equally abominable. What were the Myſteries of their Religion, but mixtures of the moſt extravagant folly and filthineſs? Their *Eleuſinia*, *Sacra*, *Floralia*, and *Bacchanal* Solemnities, were compos'd of Antick tricks, and ſuch pieces of uncleanneſs as cannot be ſpoken without a bluſh, nor thought of without polluting the mind with immodeſt *Idea*'s. What more Fantaſtick, than their Auguries by the flight of Birds, Preſages by the ſmoak of Incenſe, Fat of Sacrifices, Intrails of Beaſts, and all the other Charms and Sorceries in their Worſhip? theſe were the Notions the *Gentiles* entertain'd of God; this was the Worſhip they paid unto him; but the Chriſtian Religion overturn'd the whole Fabrick of their Worſhip, demoliſh'd their Altars, ſilenc'd their Oracles, brake down their Images, and

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ſhew'd them the Folly and Superſtition, of which they had been ſo long guilty.

A Religion that gives us the beſt and moſt compleat Character of the Divine Attributes; and repreſents him as a Being infinitely perfect, in whom all the ſcatter'd excellencies of the creatures are concenter'd, without any of their Imperfections. A Religion that declares the Greatneſs of his Majeſty, the Infinity of his Power, the unſearchableneſs of his Wiſdom, the Invariability of his Truth, the Purity of his Nature, and Boundleſneſs of his Goodneſs. A Religion which gives us the moſt lovely Deſcription of his Nature, and naturally tends to work in us the moſt awful reverence and lowly humility, filial fear and dependent confidence, the moſt ardent Love, and unſpotted Purity, chearful Obedience to every Command, and ready Submiſſion to every Providence. A Religion, whoſe Myſteries are grave and ſerious, becoming the Solemnities of Divine Worſhip, without any mixtures of folly and prophaneneſs. A Religion which declares Gods ſevere Indignation againſt Sin, and love to vertue and goodneſs, and ſtrictly charges us to imitate the Divine Purity, and thus become partakers of a Divine Nature.

Nature. And now no wonder that such a discovery as this, was a terrible Alarm to that World that lay in wickedness. No wonder that they who could injoy their Lusts without controul, and plead the example of their gods, in justification of their crimes; were so hotly enrag'd against such as gave them a quite contrary discovery of the Divine Nature. The light of the Gospel was hateful to them, who were unwilling to be rous'd from their pleasing Slumbers, and had rather have continued in their delusions. Thus were the Apostles disturbers of the Heathen World by rectifying their gross Apprehensions concerning the Nature of God, and calling them from Worshipping they knew not what, to the Service of the only living and true God.

The *Jews* indeed had clearer discoveries of Gods Nature; to them were committed his Oracles; and in *Judah* was his name known; But they had not such clear and satisfying light, as we injoy under the Gospel; they saw his back-parts only, but we behold his Face. To them he was discover'd through a darkning veil, but to us through a more perspicuous Glass. His confining the special Testimonies of his Love, to such a narrow spot of Ground as

Judea,

Judea, did seem to represent him less amiable and diffusive in his goodness, than WE have reason to apprehend him. His so rigidly insisting on ceremonial Services, and positive Institutions, and connivence at many Breaches of moral Duties, such as *Polygamy*, Divorces upon light occasions, and the Laws of Retaliation and Revenge, did tend to beget a less awful sense of his Holiness and Purity than is due unto him. In the Christian Religion; the Divine Wisdom is displai'd in more lively Colours; the Divine Goodness is written in more legible Characters; his hatred to Sin, his love to Piety, is more perspicuously discover'd. Never was there so lovely a Manifestation of all his Attributes, as in the Redemption of the World by our Saviour; the vastly extended Heavens, and all the beauteous splendid Lights that thence dart down their Influences on the World, and all the Flourishes of Divine Power and Wisdom, which may be seen upon the Earth, and all the admirable Acts of Providence, whereby God hath startled his Enemies, or sav'd his People; afford not such exalted discoveries of the Divine Wisdom, and Omnipotence, as is legible in the Incarnation, Life and Death of our Saviour. The deluge of the old World, the Flames of *Sodom*, the

Plagues

Plagues of *Egypt*, and all the Tremendous Judgments recorded in the *Old Teſtament*, were not ſo ſenſible a Declaration of Gods Indignation againſt Sin, as the anguiſh and direful Agonies of the Lord Jeſus. The miracles of Mercy extended to *Noah*, and *Abraham*, and *Joſeph*, and *David*, and all the other Worthies of *Iſrael*, give us not ſuch elevated tranſporting Apprehenſions of the depths of Divine Love, as may be drawn from the conſideration of that great Myſtery of Godlineſs, God manifeſted in the Fleſh. All the Declarations of Divine Perfections, that ever were vouchſaf'd to the World, come infinitely ſhort of theſe gracious diſcoveries in the Goſpel.

Beſides the manner whereby the *Jews* Worſhip'd God (tho he in that Infant ſtate of the Church, for wiſe reaſons was pleas'd to inſtitute it) yet was it too groſs and carnal, and not enough ſuted to his ſpiritual nature; it conſiſted in gay Shows, and pompous Solemnities; in the Circumciſion of the Fleſh, Smoke of Sacrifices, Steams of Incenſe, Purgations from ceremonial Uncleanneſs, Diſtinctions of Days, and Habits, and Meats; things that had no Intrinſick Goodneſs or worth to commend them. They had indeed a ſpiritual ſignification, but the veil of Ceremonies was ſo thick,

thick, and their Affections so carnal, that very few div'd into their Typical meaning; but Christianity teaches a Worship more admirably adapted to the Nature of God, and reason of man. *The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*, Joh. 1. 17. Grace in opposition to the legal severities; and Truth in opposition to their Types and Shadows. *God is a spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and truth*, Joh. 4. 24. not with carnal Ceremonies, but spiritual Affections; not with typical Shadows, but true and sincere Devotions. The Rites of this Religion are but few in number, and therefore far less painful and laborious: Eucharistical and Commemorative of what is past, and therefore more apt for the instilling Piety, than those typical Ordinances whose signification was more dark and obscure. In this sense 'tis acknowledg'd the Apostles did disturb the World.

2. The Apostles taught the only satisfying method of mans Reconciliation with his Maker.

This was a thing that very much puzled the considering part of mankind; and their Opinions were very different concerning it; the light of Nature taught them that they were Gods subjects, and that an entire subjection

jection to him was their Duty; they knew that Sin was an affront to his Majesty, and injury to all his Attributes; and the stings of Conscience forc'd them to confess, that they had been very faulty in their Obedience, and incur'd the just Displeasure of Heaven; and yet by Gods forbearance, they discern'd his readiness to be reconcil'd. His continuing forfeited Benefits, discover'd, that he was not willing to punish them according to their Demerits.

But how this Clemency and Mildness could be consistent with his Holiness, this very much perplex'd them. How he could preserve the rights of his Justice, and yet give such large Demonstrations of his Goodness, this they could not apprehend. Some therefore fashion'd a God altogether like themselves, and made the Poetick Fables the Rule of their Faith; the Tales of the Rapes, Adulteries, and secret amours of their reputed Deities, confirm'd them in their Sins, and thought that to Sacrifice their Lives to *Bacchus*, or dye the Martyrs of *Venus*, would be an Act no way displeasing to Heaven. Others conceiv'd, that God took no notice of smaller faults, and was not much incens'd at any crimes that brought no notable detriment to the Common-wealth. Others invented numerous expiatory Sa-

crifices, and multipli'd ſuperſtitious Inventions, hoping by theſe little things to appeaſe the anger of God. For tho, perhaps, the way of Sacrificing was inſtituted by God, and convey'd throughout the World by Tradition from *Noah*; yet they unreaſonably reſted in the Sacrifice it ſelf, never imagin'd it meerly typical, but vainly preſum'd the Blood of Lambs would waſh away their crimes; tho they were utterly deſtitute of their Innocence. In caſes of extream diſtreſs, and to ſecure them from publick threatned Judgments, they preſented their Gods with humane burnt Offerings, as if one Sin might be expiated by another of a deeper dye; but ſome were diſſatisfi'd with this method alſo, and agreed that the Supreme God delights rather in the Oblations of a pure mind, than in coſtly Incenſe, or burnt Offerings.

Others therefore, eſpecially the proud Philoſophers, were ſo little ſenſible of their Obligation to God, that they thought their good works would recompence for the ſins they committed, and their ſhadows of virtue overballance their offences. Others had ſome apprehenſions of the neceſſity of a Mediator, and therefore to Angels and Deifi'd men (who had been publick Benefactors to their Country while they liv'd) they

they addreſs'd themſelves, and brib'd them with Divine honours, to intercede with God on their behalf. This was a Doctrine generally entertain'd at *Athens*, in the Apoſtles time. In this Chapter we find, that when Saint *Paul* preach'd Jeſus and the Reſurrection, they ſay, he ſeemeth to be a ſetter forth of ſtrange Gods or *Demons*; this was the title they gave to their Mediators. Theſe ſeveral methods were contriv'd by the Heathens, to reconcile God to man; but ſtill they were very fluctuating and dubious in their Opinions; and their guilty fears made them tremble, leſt after all their thoughtful pains they ſhould have miſtaken the right method, and God ſhould be ſtill unreconcil'd.

The *Jews* indeed had many Sacrifices that were Originally deſign'd to typifie and prefigure the Death of our Lord Redeemer; and the high Prieſts entring into the Holy of Holies once a year, repreſented his Interceſſion; but theſe ſhadows were ſo obſcure, and their eyes ſo dim, that very few underſtood their ſpiritual ſignification. They generally look'd for a glorious *Meſſiah*, that ſhould Tranſlate the Empire from *Rome* to *Jeruſalem*; tread upon the Necks of their Enemies, and reign over the whole Earth with an outward magnificence

greater than that of *Solomon*. The Disciples themselves laboured under the same mistake, and never dream'd of the necessity of such an Ignominious Death as our Saviour suffer'd. Hence when he was telling them what Sufferings he must undergo, St. *Peter* very gravely rebukes him, saying, Master favour thy self, this shall not be unto thee: it was not meerly his concern for his Master, but what would become of his own designs and hopes, that drew forth those Expressions. Christ had promis'd him the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven which he knowing to be the *insignia* of great Authority in Princes Courts, interpreted it of some secular Greatness in the Kingdom of the *Messiah*. And this made him so solicitous, when our Lord spake of Suffering and Death; and for this reason our Saviour calls him Satan, the name of the Usurping God of this World; who had yet too much Power over him, *Matth.* 16. 22, 23. So also *Zebedees* Children desired one to sit at his right hand, and the other at his left, as Persons next in Dignity to him, in that earthly Kingdom they expected; and when his Death came, they then began to despair, saying, we hop'd that this *had been*

How of thoughtfulness, Page 64.

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he which ſhould have redeemed Iſrael, Lu. 24. 21. Thus we ſee the Diſciples themſelves, little expecting this way of Redemption reveald in the Goſpel.

The *Jews* indeed, eſpecially the *Phariſees*, had generally very high thoughts of their own worth, and external Priviledges, as being *Abrahams* Seed, and Gods peculiar inheritance; believ'd their good works meritorious, accounted an external Obedience to the Law, as much as was requir'd, and ſaw little or no uſe of repentance; the righteous Perſons needing no repentance, *Luk.* 15. 7. ſeems to be ſpoken with ſome Reflection on their proud conceits. If at any time they did break the Law, they hop'd to be ſav'd from puniſhment, by the *Opus operatum* of a Sacrifice; and were ſo unreaſonably vain, as to think that the Blood of Bulls and Goats would waſh away their Sin. Hence the Apoſtle is forc'd ſo laborioufly to prove, that all men being Sinners, there is no other way to be reconcil'd to God, than by the method laid down in the Goſpel, in the Epiſtle to the *Romans*; and that the Sacrifices under the Law, were only available as Typical of the great Propitiation of our Lord Redeemer; in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*. Thus abſur'd and dangerous no-

tions, did the *Jews* and *Heathens* entertain concerning the way to recover the Divine favour; and Christianity did in this sense also disturb the World, by beating down their proud conceits, and clearly discovering the vileness of their sins, by declaring that we are all Rebels against the King of Heaven; that he is so infinitely Pure and Holy, and we have rendred our selves so base and unworthy, that all our Services will be no way available without an expiatory Sacrifice; and that, the most precious that Heaven or Earth could afford, even the Blood of his own beloved Son; and that he will not listen to a Prayer from our guilty mouths, except it be hallow'd and presented to him by the hands of this spotless and only-prevailing Mediator. The Christian Religion hath brought to light that Mystery hid from Ages, God incarnate. And what was puzling and obscure before, to the most inquisitive Philosopher, is clearly unfolded in this Institution. Now we need no more be held in Bondage and doubtful suspence, but may assure our selves, That if we obey the Lord Jesus as our King, depend upon him as our Priest, and sincerely follow the rules of Life he hath laid down as our Prophet; in one word, if we heartily comply with the terms of the new Covenant

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ſeal'd in his Blood, we ſhall obtain the pardon of our ſins, the favour of God, and the rewards of eternity.

3. The Apoſtles preſcrib'd the moſt perfect and certain rules of Life.

The Heathens were only directed by the dim light of Nature; and tho they might have ſpelt out the principal parts of their Duty, by viewing the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and the other works of God: Tho many excellent Leſſons of Morality are laid down by ſome inquiſitive Philoſophers; Yet they were ſo much biaſs'd by their vicious Inclinations, that they generally rejected them; the power of their Corruption was ſo great, and the encouragements to ſupport Religion, ſo weak and uncertain, that few were influenc'd by the moſt ſubſtantial precepts of any of their Philoſophers.

The Duties of Piety towards God were commonly neglected. For while ſome queſtion'd his Being, others his Providence; While ſome confin'd him to the Heavens, others thought that at moſt he only minded the great concerns of Kingdoms and Republicks below: While ſome doubted his love to mankind, and repreſented him as an auſtere Tyrannical Being; and others limited his Power, and thought him unable to rectifie the evil Diſpoſitions of our Nature:

While some disputed his Holiness, and fashion'd to themselves an impure Deity; and others deni'd his Justice, and laugh'd at the Punishments of another World, as Bugbears, and Scare-crows, and painted Fires: While these Notions, and many more of the like tendency, were so generally entertain'd; how could it be possible, they should pay that reverence and awful fear, that love and gratitude unto him, that he deserves? Nor were they less defective in the great Duties of Morality, and common Honesty. They imbraced opinions that directly thwarted all the Duties of the Second Table, and their Actions were too consistent with their Principles. Revenge was the character of a generous Soul: and to pass by an injury, was the sign of a cowardly Spirit. Self-murther was commended as an act of Heroical bravery, and made the common practice of the highest pretenders to Wisdom. Adultery, Incest, and the crying sin of *Sodom*, were allow'd by their gods, practic'd in their Temples, and approv'd by many of their Philosophers. Rapine and Theft was encourag'd by the *Spartans* and *Egyptians*, as the matter of their Glory, not of their shame. In a word, Religion was generally accounted a politick contrivance to keep the World in aw: and Virtue

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and Vice were esteemed as bare names, and no otherwise regarded, than as Commanded or Prohibited by their respective Kings and Governours. Indeed some Philosophers did give them better Instructions; but they themselves were generally either very dubious, or swai'd so much by Custom, Education, Interest, and their own habitual Lusts, that they led not much better lives than other men; as if their Precepts were intended only for Speculation, and the entertainment of their mind, and no way for practice, and the improvement of the Life. And at the first appearance of Christianity, the World was arriv'd at an unusual height of Debauchery. The Court of *Rome* had lost all its former Virtue and Integrity, and was wholly drown'd in Luxury and Wantonness. *Epicurus*'s Philosophy was in greatest Reputation, and men Studied nothing so much as how to improve their bruitish Pleasures, to the utmost extravagance of injoyment; and other Nations follow'd the manners of their Conquerors, and imitated the then Mistress of the World, and were encourag'd by their Governours, who generally rais'd their Fortunes by their eminency in villany and wickedness.

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The *Jews* had a more compleat discovery of Gods Will. The Decalogue contains in it a brief summary of the Law of Nature; but because of the hardness of their hearts, God conniv'd at some practices, not so agreeable to his Will. Thus *Poligamy* was wink'd at, and Divorces upon slight occasions permitted; the Laws of revenge were establish'd: And so many ritual Observations injoin'd, that they were too mindful of them, and too neglectful of the weightier matters of the Law. They were very mindful of external Ceremonies, but forgot the practice of inward Virtue and Religion; they were afraid to soil themselves with imaginary ceremonial Pollutions; but wholly insensible of deeper moral defilements. They circumcis'd their Flesh, but not their Hearts; and Sacrific'd their Beasts, but not their bruitish Lusts. They us'd all possible diligence to cleanse themselves from the Leprosie of their Bodies, but took no care of the more dangerous spots on their Souls. They religiously abstain'd from the meats forbidden in their Law; but made no conscience of shunning the sinful Pollutions, that were more to be avoided. And especially, in our Saviours time, their Religion was dwindled away, and nothing but a lifeless

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ſhadow left. For one powerful Party among them, the *Sadducees*, had taken away the belief of that great Bulwark of Religion, without which it is hardly poſſible to ſubſiſt, The immortality of the Soul, and a future State. Another Sect, the *Herodians*, were Court-Flatterers, and State-Politicians, who made it an act of their Religion to comply with the humours of their Prince. Thoſe who pretended moſt to Sanctity and Piety, the *Phariſees*, had found an eaſie Religion, which they fanci'd would pleaſe God and themſelves too, conſiſting moſtly in trifles and ſhadows, and very defective in the grear Duties of Religion; they had put corrupt gloſſes on the Law of *Moſes*; and becauſe the Magiſtrate could only puniſh the outward act, they fondly preſum'd God as indulgent, and never imagin'd that their vain thoughts, or idle words, would be imputed to them as their ſins. They were indeed very careful to have a ſaint-like outſide, tho devilliſh Luſts dwelt within; and hop'd to be juſtifi'd and ſav'd, tho their hearts were never purifi'd, or amended. All their Religion lay in the Obſervations of ſome Traditions and Cuſtoms handed down from their forefathers. The Duties of Piety were ſuppli'd only by Ceremonious Services and Rites: they were abominably

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guilty of Deceit and Injuſtice, Cozenage, and Over-reaching one another; and neglected the Rules of Juſtice and common Honeſty among men; they knew no ſuch thing as a Spirit of Divine unbounded Charity; but were of very rugged, ſowr Diſpoſitions; they were ſwoln big with an high conceit of themſelves, and look'd with contempt and diſdain on the reſt of mankind: their Charity was contracted within the confines of *Judea*; and they would not ſo much as eat with an uncircumcis'd *Gentile* or *Samaritan*, nor pay them the common Offices of Civilty. In a word, their righteouſneſs was ſo lam'd, and wofully imperfect, that our Saviour tells us it could qualifie no man for Heaven, *Matt.* 5. 20.

Thus did the whole World lye in wickedneſs, and therefore no wonder that the ſtrictneſs of the Chriſtian Doctrine was ſo diſturbing to thoſe, who were unwilling to be freed from their pleaſing miſtakes.

A Doctrine, that requires we ſhould inwardly reverence and adore the Divine Majeſty, and expreſs our Adoration by ſolemn Prayers, and Praiſes, and acts of Devotion. A Doctrine, that requires a flaming Love, an humble Dependence, an awful Fear, and careful imitation of every imitable

imitable Perfection; That we ſhould give him the Supremacy of our Affections, without any corrival or competitor; That we ſhould Worſhip him only in ſuch a manner, as is agreeable to the Dignity of his Nature, and Revelation of his Will; That we ſhould never uſe his Name in a prophane irreverent manner, but always with that becoming awe, that is due to ſo Sovereign a Majeſty; That we ſhould ſanctifie that time he hath ſet apart for his Service, and then Worſhip him with ſincere devout Affections; That we ſhould be Pure, and Chaſt, and Sober, and Temperate, and Humble; tame our Fleſh, ſubdue our Luſts, be moderate in our purſuit of worldly Injoyments, contemn the World, entertain a mean Opinion of our ſelves, and all things here below: Sacrifice our ſecular Intereſts, and even life it ſelf, for the ſake of God and a good Conſcience; and always behave our ſelves as the Citizens of Heaven: That we ſhould love our Neighbour as our ſelves, and not be ſo narrow-ſoul'd, as to contain our Affections in ſmaller bounds than thoſe of the Univerſe: That we ſhould follow Peace with all men, forgive our Enemies, pray for our Perſecutors, and be kind and obliging to all with whom we converſe: That we ſhould ſubdue all angry Reſentments, and quench

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all revengeful desires, and carefully abstain from every thing that is injurious to our Neighbour; and do to others as we should reasonably desire they should do to us, were we in their circumstances. That we should in order to these ends, repent of our Sins, believe in the Lord Jesus, and depend upon the aids of Divine Grace, to enable us to purifie our thoughts and words, and purge our actions, and fit us for Heaven. These are the chief heads of the Christian Doctrine. These are the excellent Rules which our Saviour commanded by his word and blessed example. These were the Precepts that startled the World, and inflam'd the hearts of guilty Sinners with such hatred and malice against the Apostles. This was the chief cause of their enmity against the Preachers of this new Faith, even because they would have reclaim'd them from their vicious courses, and invited to the utmost heights of holiness; because they endeavour'd to pull down the Devils throne, and establish the Empire of Christ; to root up those Weeds and Briars that had overrun the Garden of God; and plant those Seeds of Grace, that might bring forth fruit unto righteousness. Their design was to work in the hearts of men, an holy conformity to the Divine Nature; and because

cauſe the Philoſophy of the Heathens, and Law of *Moſes*, was not ſo clear and perfect, as was neceſſary to bring men to happineſs; therefore did God ſend his Son to give this laſt and moſt perfect Revelation of his Will; which for clearneſs, and certainty, and perfection, far exceeds all the Volumes of Morality compil'd by Heathens, and even that Law which was given from Heaven to the *Jews*.

In theſe particulars, 'tis confeſſed, the Apoſtles did *turn the world upſide down*; but they were ſo far from deſerving a reproof, that for this very Cauſe the higheſt veneration of them, (as the moſt noble Benefactors to mankind,) is their due. The error of the men of *Lyſtra*, who took them for gods in the ſhape of men, *Acts* 14. 11. was much more excuſable than the dangerous miſtake of theſe who accuſed them for diſturbing a vicious World: For they teſtified God's approbation to their Doctrines wherever they came.

1: By their intrinſick Worth and Excellence; they maintained none of the abſurd Articles of the Gentile Faith, and impoſed none of the burthenſom Ceremonies of the Jewiſh Worſhip; but their Doctrines were all ſuited to the Reaſons of men, and commended themſelves to their approbation by

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their intrinsick Excellence. To go over the former particulars:

1. Their conceptions of God, and the manner how he will be Worshipp'd. Reason tells us, that he who gave to all their Beings and Perfections, must be himself infinitely perfect: Must injoy all excellencies in himself in an eminent degree, and be divested of every Imperfection. The works of Nature declare that he must be Infinite in Power, who created the vast Fabrick of Heaven and Earth; incomprehensible in Wisdom, who order'd every thing with such admirable harmony and agreement; and boundless in his Goodness, who gave such comely Perfections to every creature, and made them so useful and serviceable one to another; the whole World is a Map to represent these several excellencies, and every Creature a Herald to proclaim these glorious Perfections; his works of Providence discover his Justice, whereby he Thunders against obstinate Sinners; his Holiness, whereby he shows his delight in the sincerely Obedient; and his Truth, whereby he makes good his Promises and Threatnings. Indeed the Nature of God is Mysterious, and the Doctrine of the Trinity is Incomprehensible to humane Reason; but yet it is not repugnant to it. The

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Unity of the three Perſons of the Godhead, tranſcends indeed our conceptions, but reaſon connot prove it to be an impoſſibility, or to include a contradiction; for altho among creatures one nature is ſtill join'd with one ſubſiſtence; yet the Divine Nature being not of the ſame condition with created ſubſtances, it can never be prov'd impoſſible that three Divine Perſons ſhould ſubſiſt in one Nature: the manner indeed is incomprehenſible to reaſon; and it is not to be expected that a finite creature ſhould be able fully to comprehend an infinite being.

In a word, The Chriſtian Religion gives us the moſt exalted lovely apprehenſions of the Divine Nature, without any of thoſe jarring notions which the Heathens entertained; and tho there be ſome myſteries in our Faith, yet they tend only to exalt God, and debaſe Man; and 'tis our duty to believe what God ſays of himſelf, and to fall down and worſhip what we cannot comprehend.

But further, the manner of worſhipping God preſcrib'd by the Apoſtles, is highly ſuitable to his Majeſty, and becoming his Spiritual Nature; not with the follies and extravagancies of the Heathens, nor pompous and gaudy Ceremonies of the *Jews*; but with a modeſt magnificence, and comely ſimplicity; with prayer and praiſe, and ſing-

ing, and other ſolemn exerciſes of Devotion; with a reverent celebration of its myſteries, without Idolatry or Superſtition on the one hand, and without contempt of a Being ſo worthy of the moſt humble adoration, on the other. This is the method of Devotion in the Chriſtian Church; much more comely and decent, and agreeable to the Nature of God, and Reaſons of Men, than the butchery of Sacrifices, and numerous gay ſolemnities among the *Jews*, which except they had prefigured the great undertakings of the Meſſiah, would never have been injoyn'd; Much more then the ridiculous charms, and impure rites of the Heathen Worſhip, which the wiſeſt among them were aſham'd of, and only join'd therein *ut legibus juſſa non ut diis grata, as commanded by their laws, not as pleaſing to their Gods.*

2. Their Doctrine concerning mans reconciliation with God by the Lord Jeſus, tho it was above the ſphere of reaſon to invent, yet when once reveal'd; appears highly ſatisfactory to reaſon; for when man had wilfully broke the Divine Law, and expoſed himſelf to the threatned puniſhments of infinite juſtice; God, that he might ſignalize his mercy, and fill the hearts and mouths of Men and Angels with the moſt ardent love, and admiring Hallelujahs, was pleas'd to diſpence

dispence with his threatning, and show himself ready to be reconcil'd. Now what imaginable way can we think of, more agreeable to reason, whereby man may be restor'd to the divine favour? shall he meerly pardon sinners? this clemency would be but weakness and foolish pity: for it would argue, either that he wanted Power to effect what he threatned; or was defective in Wisdom, as if he thought his law unadvisedly made, and foresaw not the inconveniences it would occasion: Or, that he was not infinite in Holiness, who could so easily be reconcil'd to sinful rebels. Besides, this would weaken his Government over Angels and Men, and encourage them to sin for the future in hopes of the same mercy and compassion.

Thus we see how unreasonable it is to imagine God should meerly pardon sinners: It was necessary therefore that some satisfaction should be made; and except this be proportionable to the offence, the same inconveniences will still follow: the repute of the Law will not be kept up; God will still labour under the dishonourable reflections of Levity, Impotence, and Impurity; and Men will be encouraged to sin for the future, with hopes of an easy remedy. This burden was too weighty for the shoulders of any creature: such is the Malignity of sin,

and so great a dishonour to the Divine Majesty, that it is impossible the services and sufferings of a meer creature should compensate for the affront. It was necessary that God should satisfy Himself; and because those satisfactions do most secure the ends of satisfaction, which come as near the threatned penalty as may be, 'twas necessary he should become man, live a life of misery, and dye an accursed death, and endure such agonies and torments of Body and Soul, as might represent more livelyly to the sons of men, what their sins had deserved, and come as near the penalty as the dignity and innocence of his Nature would permit. Thus Gods hatred of sin is most clearly display'd; and men are most effectually deterr'd from continuance in any iniquity. Thus the Divine Wisdom, and Power, and Holiness, and Mercy, shine in their brightest lustre, and conspire together in a most admirable harmony and agreement; and that men might still be more apprehensive of their own vileness, God, notwithstanding all the wonders of his love, testifies his hatred to our sins by refusing to admit any immediate applications to him; and resolving to accept of no services, nor hear any prayers that are not perfum'd by the intercession of his beloved Son. This is the admirable Gospel-method

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of propitiating the Divine Favour, which we indeed dar'd not once to have thought of, till God had reveal'd it: but now it is made known, appears to be only ſatisfactory to reaſon. What the Sacrifices, and Offerings, and other contrived methods of ſatisfaction among the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, were too weak to effect; this, this is done by the great Sacrifice of our Lord Redeemer.

3. Their precepts and rules of Life were all reaſonable and advantagious to our intereſt; conducive to the health of our bodies, the tranquility of our minds, the peace of our conſciences, the ſweetning of our tempers, the exalting our natures, the improvement of our eſtates, the advancement of our reputation, and the comfort of our lives. By the practiſe of them, we ſhall conſult our private intereſt, obtain the good will and reſpect of men, and promote the publick benefit of all. We ſhall act worthy of our ſelves, and becoming our reaſon; obtain the Divine Favour, and reſemble the Divine Nature. What more comely and decent than a profound admiration of him, who is ſo Glorious and excellent in himſelf! An ardent love of him who is ſo kind and beneficial to us! An awful reverence of him who is ſo Powerful, Holy, Wiſe, and Juſt! and a cheerful obedience to all his Laws,

who is our Soveraign and our Father, our Friend and beſt Benefactor! What more reaſonable than prayer to him, who is able to ſupply our wants? and praiſe and thankſgiving to the ſame God, who gives all the comforts of this life, and from whom we expect the rewards of a better? What more juſt, and fit, and conducible to our intereſt, than that we ſhould be upright in our dealings with our neighbour, veracious in our words, faithful in our truſts, ſincere in our contracts, innocent and inoffenſive in our whole behaviour, avoiding every thing that may be to his prejudice, and uſing all means to oblige him, and further his welfare? What more reaſonable than that we ſhould be civil and courteous and good natur'd to all, and be ready to perform friendly offices to ſuch as beg or need our aſſiſtance? What more reaſonable than to be peaceable and orderly in our ſtations, obſervant and reſpectful to Superiors, meek and gentle to our inferiors, kind and familiar with our equals, modeſt and lowly, ingenuous and compliant in all our behaviour? There are ſecret charms in ſuch a converſation as this, which cannot but command the love and eſteem of all men. What more reaſonable than that reaſon ſhould have its due prerogative within us? Not depreſs'd by a domineering

neering appetite, deluded by an enticing world, or ſeduc'd by a deceitful Devil? That we ſhould have a mean opinion of our ſelves ſuitable to our condition of weakneſs and dependence, ſin and folly; that we be ſo moderate in the uſe of the innocent comforts of this life, as no way to impair our health, corrupt our minds, ſtain our reputations, prejudice our peace, endamage our eſtates, or our lives. What more reaſonable than a generous contempt of theſe mean and fading injoyments, and an elevation of our thoughts and affections to that Heaven, where are objects more worthy our immortal Souls, and only ſatisfactory to that Heavenly off-ſpring within us? What more reaſonable than to be ſorry for our paſt offences, and reſolve amendment? he that retains a love to his ſin, and reſolves to perſiſt in his rebellion, deſerves to die for his crimes, and to have no benefit by an offer'd pardon. What more reaſonable than to believe in the Lord Jeſus? and ſeeing he hath been ſo compaſſionate over us, to truſt in his Merits, obey his Laws, and comply with the terms of his Covenant?

Theſe are the precepts our Religion boaſts of, as her Crown and Glory. Theſe are the ſubſtantial Rules we have reaſon to glory in; ſo admirably fitted to the Glory of God,

and the good of mankind; so friendly to human society, and advantagious to the interest of every man in the world.

Let the Heathens now cease their boasts of the wise Laws of *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, or *Numa*; for whatever was excellent in them, is more clearly laid down in the Laws of Christ, without any mixture of their imperfections. Let the *Jews* cease their triumphs in the Law of *Moses*; for behold a greater than *Moses* is here. Thus it appears, that the Christian Doctrine by its intrinsick worth discover'd its Divine Original, and by its bearing the image of Gods Holiness, Wisdom and Goodness, manifested from whence it proceeded.

2. By the external testimonies God gave of his approbation.

1. By prophesies. God had frequently foretold that he design'd to abolish that legal worship he had set up, and give a more compleat revelation of his will, more agreeable to his own Spiritual Nature, and the reasons of men. That he would enlarge the bounds of his dominion, remove that ceremonial worship which could only be practis'd in *Judea*; and that *spiritual incense, and a pure offering should be offered up in every place; and the gentiles should call upon him*; That he would

Mal. 1. 11.

would raiſe up a Prophet like unto *Moſes* (who thereſore muſt be a Law-giver, and Mediator of a new Covenant, as *Moſes* was) and that he ſhould have Words, new Revelations put into his Mouth; to him the People were obliged to hearken with Attention and Obedience. *Deut.* 18. 15.

That God would make a new Covenant with the houſe of Iſrael, different from that made in *Egypt*. And would write his Laws, not upon Tables of Stone, but in their hearts, *i. e.* he would give them ſuch Inſtitutions as are eaſily diſcoverable by the light of nature; ſo that there would not be ſo much need of teaching every man his Neighbour, but every man ſhall eaſily underſtand his Duty. Jer. 31. 31.

That the *Aaronical* Prieſthood ſhould be aboliſh'd, and that of *Melchiſedeck* be eſtabliſh'd, which ſhould endure for ever. That a new Heaven, and a new Earth ſhould be created, a Worſhip more agreeable to Heaven, and advantagious to Earth. That the Ark of the Covenant ſhould be no more viſited; and God would gather all Nations unto him, and out of them chuſe to himſelf Prieſts and Levites. *Pſal.* 110. 4. *Jer.* 3. 16. *Iſa.* 66. 18, 21.

That

That the Desir'd of all Nations should come, and erect a spiritual Universal Kingdom in the hearts of men, to give them more perfect Laws, and reduce them to fuller Knowledg, and better Obedience. Thus was it Prophecy'd of old, that the *Jewish* Ceremonial Religion should be abolish'd, and a more perfect Revelation substituted in its place. It is indeed said of some of the *Jewish* Ceremonies, that they were to continue for ever, but that was only to distinguish them from some temporary Injunctions, that were of force only while they were in the Wilderness, or when they were Inhabitants of *Canaan*; but were to be practic'd in all places, till by a new signification of the Divine Will, they were forbidden. And it's observable, that in the *Jewish* Law, the word [*for ever*] doth oftentimes, only import a continuance to the Jubilee; so that these rituals were to continue till the coming of the *Messiah*, the great Jubilee of the World. Thus hath God declar'd his Abrogation of the *Jewish* Worship, and by his Providence hath further disoblig'd us from the Observance of it; nay disabled the most obstinate Adherents to it, from performing the

Hag. 2. 7.

Bates, *Of the Christian Religion*, page 78.

the chief Rites of their Religion. He hath demoliſh'd their Temple, confounded their Tribes, and forc'd them to wander for Sixteen hundred years without a Prieſt or Sacrifice, *Ephod* or *Teraphim*. God hath aboliſh'd the *Jewiſh* Worſhip, which he once allow'd; and the Doctrine of the Apoſtles was only that compleat Revelation of the Divine Will, which was foretold by the Prophets of the Lord; and therefore theſe *Jews* had no reaſon to quarrel at the Apoſtles, as turners of the World upſide down.

2. By Miracles. Tho the intrinſick Excellence of theſe Doctrines, and their being a completion of thoſe Prophecies which were long before publiſh'd to the *Jews*, were ſufficient Evidence of Gods Approbation; Yet becauſe the *Jewiſh* Religion was confirm'd by Miracles, and that dull People was hardly to be convinc'd any other way; becauſe a Religion ſo contrary to the ſecular Intereſts, ancient Cuſtoms, inveterate Prejudices, and corrupt Inclinations of the Heathens, could hardly expect much more ſucceſs than the Precepts of their ſober Philoſophers, except the Power of God were diſplaid in ſome eminent ſurprizing manner: That men might be therefore render'd utterly inexcuſable in their unbelief, our Saviour by many miraculous works declar'd,

that

that the hand of God was with him. He outdid *Moses*; before he displac'd him, and shew'd the pre-eminence of his Doctrine, by his more wonderful works. He was born of an immaculate Virgin, and honour'd by a miraculous Star. He was proclaim'd the true *Messiah*, by the Gratulations of Angels; and Worshipp'd in his Cradle by the Wise-men of the *East*; the Holy Ghost descended on him at his Baptism, and a voice from Heaven (such as perhaps had never been heard since the delivery of the Law) declar'd that he came as an extraordinary Agent from God. I know the *Jews* make their boasts of many Voices from Heaven, which they call *Bathcol*, after the days of *Malachi*; but we may well account them Forgeries, or Diabolical Illusions; for it is utterly unimaginable, That when Divine Vengeance had taken away vision and prophecy, and all other immediate revelations, he should give this plain discovery of his will. The new Law of Christ, was therefore attested by the same way of evidence, with the old Law of *Moses*; Thus also at his transfi-
Luke 17. 5. guration, the same voice in the presence of *Moses* and *Elias*, comes from God with the addition of, *Hear him*; as if he should say, You have obey'd my servants *Moses* and *Elias*, the instruments

I chiefly us'd in establishing the old Law; but now hear and obey my Son, and that full and compleat Law he shall promulge. This great attestation, if there were no other, would confirm the truth of Christianity. But to go on; Angels Minister'd to him in his temptations; and he fasted even above the possibility of Nature; all sorts of diseases fled before him, and he cur'd more plagues than *Moses* brought upon *Egypt*; Fevers, Palsy, Leprosy, Distractions, were heal'd by no Medicinal Applications, but meerly by a touch of his Hand, or word of his Mouth. He laid his Commands on the stormy winds, and they were obedient; and still'd the rage of a tempestuous Sea. He satisfi'd the hunger of thousands with almost nothing, and multipli'd five Loaves and two Fishes to content a numerous multitude. He spake such words as gave ears to the deaf; and loosend the tongue of the dumb to proclaim his divine commission The touch of his Garment stop'd a flux of blood; and [*I will, be thou clean*] chas'd away a leprous defilement. *Talitha Cumi*, restor'd the Rulers Daughter to life; and the touch of a Bier converted the sorrows of a funeral into mirth and gladness. *Lazarus come forth*, recover'd that dead that was almost putrifi'd in the grave; and, O *woman great is thy faith, be it unto thee as thou wilt*,

Cur'd

Cur'd the Canaanitish womans daughter that was poſſeſs'd, and at a great diſtance from him. The Devils were forc'd to flee with haſte from the bodies of men, and tremblingly, acknowledg him to be the Son of God. Clay and Spittle, apt to ſtrengthen blindneſs, rather than take it away, gave ſight to him that was born blind; and by the moſt preternatural means, he wrought the moſt wonderful works. He foretold his own death, with all its tragical circumſtances, and predicted his own Reſurrection. The deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, the Perſecution of his Diſciples, the Deſtruction of the *Jews*, and the propagation of Chriſtianity, were all related by him, long before their accompliſhment. The Earth was caſt into trembling Convulſions, the Rocks were rent, the Sun was Eclips'd, contrary to all the rules of Aſtronomy; and inſenſible Nature was caſt into an Univerſal agony, as if it were indued with knowledg, at his Funeral.

At the time appointed, he aroſe again, and numerous departed Saints with him. He convers'd with men for forty days on Earth, and was ſeen by 500 at once; at laſt he aſcended into Heaven before a great multitude of admiring ſpectators; and did not vaniſh away on a ſudden, but went up with all

all the solemnity and leisure of a triumph; from thence he dispens'd his gifts to his Apostles; inspir'd a mean company of illiterate Fisher-men with a spirit of prophecy and revelation, and gave them power of speaking in many of those languages which the curse of *Babel* brought upon the world. They perform'd all sorts of miracles by the bare use of his Name; and did such mighty works as amaz'd all spectators. He turn'd a Wolf into a Lamb; and the bare words of [*Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me*], chang'd a furious persecutor into a zealous convert. These things were not done in a corner, but openly before the *Jews* and *Gentiles*. In *Judea*, where the best worship of God was establish'd, and diabolical impostures most abhor'd. In *Jerusalem*, the Metroplis of that Nation. In their Synagogues, and publick assemblies, before his most inveterate and obstinate adversaries; and yet none of these could deny the matter of fact, but out of envy and ill will, imputed them to Magick, and the assistance of the Devil. But alas! the nature of these works, so good and beneficial to man kind, and their design and tendency to pull down that dominion the Devil had so long usurp'd, and plant that holiness in the hearts of Men, which is so contrary to his Nature; clearly testify, that

such

ſuch an accuſation could proceed from nothing but deviliſh envy and malice.

Theſe were the credentials that Chriſt brought with him from Heaven.

Theſe were the convincing Arguments that he was ſent from God.

Theſe were the demonſtrations which overpower'd the reaſons of men, diſpell'd that thick darkneſs which had ſo long overſpread the Earth, and ſo ſoon fill'd the world with the light and knowledg of the Goſpel; and therefore theſe *Jews* ought not ſo clamorouſly to have accus'd the Apoſtles, but with joy and admiration to have flock'd together, ſaying, Theſe Teachers ſent from God, that have reform'd the world, *are come hither alſo.*

II. Queſt. *Whether the Apoſtles diſturb'd the world, by teaching Doctrines of Rebellion?* *For the ſenſe may be, Theſe that raiſe mutinies in every place, overturn* Ceſars *Authority, and Preach up Allegiance to another King, one Jeſus,* are come hither alſo.

Here my buſineſs is to prove, That Chriſtianity doth not deſtroy, but eſtabliſh and confirm that Duty which the Law of Nature challenges from Subjects to their Prince. Indeed the *Jews* were (of all men) moſt

moſt unjuſt in this accuſation. For the great reaſon of their malice againſt Jeſus, was, becauſe where as they expected a Meſſiah that ſhould break the *Roman* Yoke, and deliver them from the Tyranny and oppreſſion of *Ceſar*; That ſhould Redeem them from their Vaſſalage to an uncircumcis'd Emperor; and reign as a victorious *Monarch* over the world: He diſappointed their proud expectations, came in a mean and humble manner; proclaim'd himſelf the true Meſſiah; and yet declar'd that his Meſſage was peace and not war; and that his Kingdom was Spiritual, and not of this world. If he would have aſcended the Throne of *David*, and warr'd againſt the principalities and powers on Earth, inſtead of thoſe of Hell: If inſtead of raiſing up *Lazarus* and ſome meaner perſons, he would have reſtor'd to life their *Sampſons* and *Joſhuas*, and mighty men of valour; If inſtead of teaching them the way to be ſav'd from eternal Miſery, he would have inſtructed them how to be freed from Earthly Bondage; and inſtead of bringing them news of the Kingdom of Heaven, he would have brought the more welcome tidings of that Kingdom on Earth they expected: Then they would have gladly receiv'd him as the promis'd Meſſiah, the Son of God. But ſeeing he im-

ploy'd his power another way, they misrepresent his Doctrine, slander his Person, Persecute him to death as an enemy to *Cesar*; and accuse his followers as disloyal persons, and Authors of Rebellion. But that the Christian Religion is no friend to disloyalty, a very little search will quickly determine; for obedience to Magistrates is very much urg'd, and Rebellion severely reprehended in the Gospel. The great design of Christs coming into the world, was peace; To reconcile God to man, and men to one another. To subdue our passions, and calm our discontents. To pull down our pride, and abate our selfishness. To polish the roughness of our natures, and take away all those impediments which would hinder our paying a due observance to superiors. None of his Doctrines did ever infringe the Magistrates Power; but he perswaded men to be subject, not only for wrath and fear of punishment, but out of a principle of conscience and duty. Tho he was Universal King of the whole Creation, yet his Kingdom was no way destructive of the just rights of *Cesar*. Tho he challeng'd Subjection to him from all his followers, yet he press'd both by precept and example a due subjection to their Emperor also. The same mouth that commands *to pay unto God the things that*

that are Gods, requires us also, *to pay unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's*. He works a Miracle to pay the tribute-penny, which was either a tax impos'd by the *Romans*, or rather requir'd by the *Sanhedrim*, for the use of the Temple. Either way he declares his subjection to the Civil or Ecclesiastical Government. He commands his Disciples to pray for their persecutors, not to curse and damn them; and gives them leave to fly from their rage, but not to oppose and resist it. He hid himself from the People, when they would have made him a King: and check'd his Disciples when they vainly contested about priority, in that Earthly Kingdom they fondly expected. He Rebuk'd *Peters* forward zeal for his Master, when he cut off *Malchus*'s Ear; and to prevent the Slanders of his Enemies, miraculously cur'd the injur'd person. Tho he could have commanded twelve Legions of Angels to his rescue, yet he chose rather to imploy them in messages of peace: and tho with those Majestick words of [*I am he*] He could have struck the Souldiers dead, as well as down to the earth: yet did he meekly submit without any resistance; he went as a Sheep to the Slaughter, and as a Lamb he was dumb and open'd not his mouth. Tho his adversaries bare manifest false-witness a- *Mark.* 12. 17

gainſt him, yet was he meek and compaſſionate, and the ſharpneſs of his pain extorted no paſſionate exclamations againſt the injury they had done him. But on the contrary, he forgot not his own precepts, but breath'd out that admirable prayer for them, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do.* And his Diſciples did exactly imitate their Lord. And tho they liv'd among his enemies and their own, and met with injuries enough to have inflam'd their Spirits; yet they give us the ſame leſſons of peaceable ſubjection to the higher powers. Saint *Paul* that is here accus'd, commands the *Romans* (tho living under *Nero* an *Heathen*, a Tyrant, a Perſecutor, and one of the moſt infamous Monſters in Nature) To be ſubject to the higher powers, and render fear, honour, tribute, cuſtom to them. Nor was this ſubmiſſion only conſtrain'd through the neceſſity of thoſe times, wherein they had not power to reſiſt, For, ſays he, *we muſt needs be ſubject not only for wrath; but for conſcience ſake; and he that reſiſts, ſhall receive to himſelf damnation?* And becauſe perhaps ſome ſeeds of Rebellion might begin in thoſe early days to be ſow'd by ſome Hereticks, the Apoſtle exhorts *Titus*, to put his converts in mind of their duty of ſubjection

Rom. 13.

Tit. 3. 1.

jection to principalities and powers. The ſame doctrine is urg'd by Saint *Peter*, *Submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord ſake.* Indeed the Chriſtian Religion is the beſt ſecurity to governours, of the obedience of their ſubjects. A diſloyal Chriſtian is a perfect contradiction. He can be no true friend to Chriſt his ſupreme King, who rebels againſt his deputies and vicegerents. True undiſſembled Loyalty is the very complexion of a Chriſtian; and the beſt Chriſtians are always the moſt, I had almoſt ſaid the only Loyal Subjects. The Apoſtles therefore did not deny but inforce ſubjection to Magiſtrates. Indeed where the commands of God and their Prince interfer'd, in this caſe they reſolv'd to be faithful to God, and dar'd to do what he commanded, tho *Ceſar* forbid it. They did not deify their Emperor, but pay'd him all that reverence that was due to a Crowned Head. They accounted Princes Gods Subjects, and thought Rebellion againſt him a greater crime, than againſt the higheſt *Monarch.* In this caſe they appeal'd to their adverſaries themſelves whether reaſon was not on their ſide, couragiouſly ſaying, *whether it be right in the ſight of God to hearken to you rather than God, judge ye.* *Acts* 4. 19.

But tho they could not actually obey the unjuſt Command of their Magiſtrates, yet then they made no violent reſiſtance, but paſſively ſubmitted to the exacted puniſhment. As they profeſs'd a lowly Subjection to Chriſt their King in Heaven, ſo they paid a reſpectful Obedience to his Lieutenants and Repreſentatives on Earth. They teſtifi'd their Loyalty to Chriſt, by the reſpect they gave to the Commands of his Deputies. Theſe *Jews* therefore had no reaſon to accuſe the Apoſtles, as encouragers of Rebellion; and in either of theſe ſenſes the Apoſtles were not blameable turners of the World upſide down. They were wholly innocent in this latter ſenſe, and deſerv'd Commendation for diſturbing the World in the former ſenſe; and would to God the whole Chriſtian World at this day might be as eaſily defended, as Chriſt and his Holy Apoſtles. And this leads me to the ſaddeſt part of my Subject.

III. Queſt. *Whether any profeſſed Chriſtians at this day, are guilty of turning the World upſide down?*

Anſ. A very little inquiry will preſent to our conſideration a potent Faction, that proudly Uſurps the name of the Catholick Church,

Church, whoſe Principles and Practiſes do clearly overturn the whole deſign of Chriſtianity, and are pernicious to Governours; who have ſheltred Heatheniſh Superſtitions in Chriſtian Temples, after the Power of God had chas'd them away; and dug up ſome Limbs of the Ceremonial Law out of the Grave, after Divine Wiſdom had rung her Knell, and proclaim'd her Funeral. I know what an invidious task it is, to accuſe a whole Body of men; and certainly, he that hath any Love to God, or his Redeemer, cannot account it a delightful office, to ſatisfie his own Reaſon, or convince the Judgments of others, That his God is blaſphem'd, and his Saviour diſhonour'd, by an huge party of men, who pretend to be of his Holy Religion. But becauſe this Infection is of a ſpreading nature, and the growth of Popery is too common, and too juſt a complaint; and the Bigots of that Church are continually uſing all the artifices of Cunning, and Inſinuatoin, and Treachery, to delude the eaſie multitude, and once more Introduce their blind Religion into our Nation: I cannot think it an unſeaſonable work, but a piece of charity to the Souls of men, to give a juſt Character of that Religion, which if God had not, and did not ſtill mercifully interpoſe, would

have again overspread this Land, as well as other Nations.

I shall therefore pursue my former method, and inquire,

Quest. 1. *Whether they have introduc'd new Doctrines, different from what the Apostles taught? and what warrant they can produce for doing so?*

Ans. He that runs over the former particulars, may soon be satisfi'd, that they have restor'd absur'd Gentile Idolatry, and superannuated Jewish Ceremonies, and wofully corrupted Christianity in those great Articles wherein I have show'd its pre-eminence to consist.

1. They have introduc'd new Doctrines concerning God, and the manner how he will be Worshipp'd. This will be evident if we reflect upon these four particulars following.

1. *Their Representing and Worshipping God by Images.*

2. *Their Adoration of Saints and Angels.*

3. *Their Adoration of the Host.*

4. *The manner of their Worship too exactly symbolizes with that of* Jews *and* Heathens.

1. *Their Representing and Worshipping God by Images.* Those who are acquainted with any

any thing of the *Romiſh* Worſhip, know how in their Churches, nay, in their Pſalters, Maſs-books, and Manuals of Devotion the incomprehenſible Trinity is pictur'd: ſometimes like an old Man, with a long grey Beard, and a ray of light over his head, with a Crucifix between his Knees, or a Child in his Arms, and a Dove with ſpread Wings under his Beard. Sometimes like a Monſter, with three Faces in a Knot. Now, how abominably fooliſh and impious are ſuch Repreſentations as theſe? What ridiculous entertainment doth this afford to the *Socinian*? And how doth it expoſe this ſacred Myſtery, to his Deriſion and Contempt? How naturally doth this tend to debaſe the Divine Majeſty, as if the Infinite Lord of Angels and Men, bore any reſemblance to his imperfect Creatures; and the incomprehenſible Majeſty of Heaven and Earth, were like ſuch Worms and Duſt as we? If any man ſhould reverence a Worm, or a Toad, as the Image of his Prince, would not ſuch a mans honorary reſpect be interpreted as an high affront? And is it not an infinitely greater Indignity to Worſhip the Divine Majeſty in the ſhape of the moſt glorious of any of his Creatures? There is very great danger, leſt the ignorant Vulgar ſhould fancy God like the Images

Images he is repreſented by; and they naturally tend at leaſt, to debaſe our conceptions of his incomprehenſible nature. His Immenſity cannot be repreſented by a piece of Wood; nor his Infinity by a finite Idol. Images are apt to ſuggeſt too low Thoughts, and mean Apprehenſions of his Nature, and therefore are not to be us'd. If it be pleaded, That ſuch Repreſentations may be inſtrumental to raiſe our Thoughts, and excite dovout Affections within us. Alas! he that hath not rais'd Apprehenſions of the Divine Majeſty and Greatneſs, from the conſideration of his own glorious works, muſt expect little benefit by the imperfect Art and Invention of man. Let them therefore call Images Laymen's books; till they ſhow us Gods Licenſe and Imprimatur for them, we ſhall eſteem them as Surreptitious Pamphlets, offenſive to the King of Heaven. If it be again pleaded, That God (by his appearances to *Abraham* and the Patriarchs, in the form of a man, and his being repreſented as an old man to *Daniel*, and the Holy Ghoſt's deſcent in the form of a Dove) hath authoriz'd ſuch Repreſentations. I anſwer; The appearances to the Patriarchs were of the ſecond Perſon in the Trinity, as Anticipations of his Incarnation, and were no Repreſentations of his

his Nature, but only ſigns that he was then, and there preſent. As to that in *Dan.* 7. 9. concerning the Ancient of days, that was only repreſented to the inward ſenſe of *Daniel* in a Viſion, and was only a Symbol of Gods fitneſs to Judg the World: White, to denote the purity of his Nature; Ancient of days, to repreſent his eternity; and white hair, to ſhadow out his Wiſdom and Prudence. As to that of *Matth.* 3. 16. Dr. *Hammond*'s Expoſition takes off all neceſſity of anſwer, according to him, the Expreſſion (*like a Dove*) hath reference not to any aſſumed likeneſs, but to the manner of the deſcent, that he came down upon him, as Doves uſe to do, when they light upon any thing, hovering and overſhadowing it. Thus we know, the Holy Ghoſt deſcended on the Virgin *Mary*, *Luke* 1. 35. For St. *Luke* indeed adds, in a bodily ſhape; but that may be render'd with a bodily appearance; ſo that perhaps the Holy Ghoſt might appear in no outward Figure, but only appear to be preſent, by the appearance of Angels; and it is not unlikely it might be in a bright ſhining Cloud, as at the transfiguration of our Saviour, *Matth.* 17. 5. it is ſaid, *A bright ſhining cloud overſhadow'd them*, deſcending

Hammond in *Matth.* 3. 16.

as

as Doves use to do. For the full confirmation of this, I must refer to the place. But if the general Exposition be allow'd, That the Holy Ghost did appear in such a symbolical Figure; this was only to represent the Innocence of our Saviour, and the purity and peaceableness of that Religion he was then beginning to teach the World: No representation of his Natnre. Nor can God be worshipp'd under any corporal Figure, without palpable Idolatry. For, as soon may deliberate Murder and Adultery be reconcil'd to the *6th* and *7th*, as this can to the *2d*-Commandment. And our *Romish* Doctors are very conscious of this, and therefore have very fairly expung'd it out of their Catechisms and Manuals, and split the tenth into two, to keep up the number. They had reason to fear, lest the Laity not having such Metaphysical heads as themselves (if they had left it standing) should have been deterr'd from so gainful a sin. For *thou shalt not make a Graven Image*, would quickly make their Temples desolate; and, *thou shalt not bow down to the likeness of any thing in Heaven or Earth*, would open the eyes of their deluded Proselytes, if they were but permitted to read them. Words so fully Emphatical and Comprehensive, that all worship of Images could hardly

hardly have been condemn'd in more large and significant terms. And *Moses*, who best knew the meaning of the Lawgiver, hath given a clear comment upon this Command, Deut. 4. 15, 16. *Take ye therefore good heed unto your selves, for you saw no manner of similitude when the Lord appeared unto you in Horeb; lest ye corrupt your selves, and worship Graven Images.* If the Heathen Idolatry were only forbidden, of what inconsequent arguing, would *Moses* here be guilty? Take heed lest ye worship the Images of false gods, for ye never saw any Representation of the true God. But if all Worship of Images be here forbidden, then the Argument is very pertinent and forcible. Take heed how ye Worship God in any outward Representation; for if such a thing were pleasing to him, he would not have left it to your choice, to do it in what form you pleas'd, but would have appear'd in such a likeness as best pleas'd himself.

golden Calf

Besides, the golden Calf, which the *Israelites* worshipp'd as a resemblance of God, was a breach of this Commandment, and is called an Idol, *Acts* 7. 41. For that the *Israelites* did make this as a resemblance of the true God, is clear from the Story. *Aaron* *Exodus* 32.

says,

says, *these be thy Gods, O* Israel, *that brought thee out of the Land of* Egypt; and Proclaims a Feast to *Jehovah*; for either we must suppose the *Israelites* to be so stupidly sottish as to suppose this Calf to be really that God that brought them out of *Egypt* before it was made; or if we cannot find in our hearts to believe them so absurd; we must believe they fell back to the *Egyptian* Idolatry, or worshipt the true God under this representation. That it was not a resemblance of the *Egyptian* Gods, is evident from hence, that he is call'd *Jehovah*, and is represented as the God that brought them out of *Egypt*; for could they once imagine that the *Egyptian* Gods had destroy'd their own most zealous worshippers, and wrought such wonders for them who abhor'd their worship, and would give them no adoration? is it not much more rational to suppose, that the *Israelites* expected some symbol of the Divine Presence going before them? as they might expound that promise, *Exod.* 23. 20. And (*Moses* being absent for 40 Days) they doubting whether ever they should see him more, devise with themselves what token to have of Gods presence with them; and the most part being sway'd by

See more of this in Stillingfleets *Defence of the Idolatry of* R. C. Page 747

by their Education in *Egypt*, where they worſhip'd their chief god *Oſyris* in the form of a Bull, compel *Aaron* to make a Golden Calf. And if this be in them accounted Idolatry, muſt not the ſame title be given to our *Romiſh* worſhippers of Graven Images? Of the ſame ſin was *Micah* guilty, in *Judg.* 17. who, to eaſe himſelf of the trouble of travelling ſo often to *Shiloh* to worſhip there, made a molten and graven image as a repreſentation of the Lord *Jehovah*; builds a Chappel in his houſe, and hires a *Levite* to be his Prieſt, and in this rejoyces exceedingly, *now know I*, ſays he, *that the Lord will do me good, ſeeing I have a* Levite *to my Prieſt*, *Judg.* 17. 13. Of the ſame nature was that great ſin of *Jeroboam*, for which he is branded with ſo black a Character in Scripture; he made two Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*, as a repreſentation of God. 'Tis plain he deſign'd not to draw the *Iſraelites* from the Worſhipping God, but from going up to Jeruſalem to Worſhip; leſt their converſe with the Two Loyal Tribes ſhould revive their principles of Loyalty alſo, and reduce them to their ſubjection to their Lawful Sovereign; and therefore his ſucceſſors were look'd upon as worſhippers of *Jehovah*. Thus *Jehu* was zealous for the Lord *Jehovah*, though he de- Oſyris 2 *King.* 10. 16.

parted

parted not from this sin of *Jeroboam*. Thus it appears, how plainly God hath forbidden all worship of him by images. And that this Law was not only positive and temporary, but unalterably obliging all men, appears from the reason of the Law. The unsuitableness of an image to the Divine Nature, *Isa.* 40. 18, 25. The Prophet there after a stately and majestick description of the Divine Greatness, concludes with this inference; *To whom then will ye liken God? Or what likeness will ye compare unto him?* As if he should say, Seeing God is so immensly Glorious a being, your own reasons may convince you of the folly of making any representations of him. John 4. 24. *God is a Spirit, and will be worship'd in spirit and truth.* That is, as some interpret the words, not in the Image of a Dove, as the *Samaritans* Worship'd him on Mount *Gerizim*, nor with the Typical Shadows of the *Jewish* Law. St. *Paul* when arguing with the *Athenians*, bends his discourse against their Worshipping the Sovereign God in the likeness of silver, or gold, or stone, *Acts* 17. 29. and in *Rom.* 1. 23. He disputes against the wiser Philosophers, and accuses them, that when they knew God to be an Immensly Glorious being, they fashion'd him like a man; and Worship'd him by Images; and the accusation will equally

concern

concern our preſent *Romiſh* pretenders to Wiſdom. The ſame apologies the wiſe men of *Athens* and *Rome* made, to excuſe their Heatheniſh Idolatry, are adapted by the Popiſh Schools, to juſtify their worſhipping Images. *Plutarch*, and *Celſus*, and *Julian*, and *Maximus Tyrius*, and many others, tell us, they look'd upon Images only as helps to remembrance, and means of exciting their devotions; nay, the worſhippers of the Sun and Moon and Stars, might better apologize for themſelves; For theſe natural Images are great Monuments of the Divine Wiſdom, and Power, and Goodneſs; but the preſent artificial ones, expreſs only the Gravers skill and imperfect cunning. Nay further, the very ſame pleas might be us'd by the Prieſts of *Egypt*, to juſtify their moſt ridiculous follies. Leeks and Onions may as well draw forth my penitential tears; deified Apes and Monkeys may as well be the objects of my adoration, as the Monſtrous Pictures of the Trinity in their Temples. But how contradictory ſoever this practiſe be to Scripture, Images may well agree to that Church, which retains little more than the faint image and ſhadow of a Religion.

2. *Their Adoration of Saints and Angels*, and giving them the ſame Worſhip the

Heathens gave to their *Dæmons*, or inferior *Deities*.

By *Dæmons*, the Heathens underſtood an inferior ſort of deified powers, as middle Beings between the Sovereign God, and mortal men; and becauſe they thought the higher God too pure and ſublime to meddle with Earthly affairs, they placed theſe as Mediators to preſent the prayers of Men to God, and convey the benefits of God to Men; thus *Plato* and *Heſiod*, and others that deſcribe them. To this opinion the Apoſtle ſeems to allude, in 1 Cor. 8. 5. 6. *As there be Gods many, and Lords many: yet to us there is but one God the Father, and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, i. e.* Tho the Heathens Worſhip'd many Supreme Gods, and inferior powers, as Preſidents and Mediators in Earthly things; yet we Chriſtians acknowledg but one ſovereign Deity, and one Mediator, who preſents our Prayers to the Father, and brings us back the rewards of our Devotion from Heaven. Theſe the Heathens divided into two ſorts, ſuch as were too pure to inform a body, and ſuch as were the ſouls of deceaſed benefactors To theſe they erected Temples and Altars, made Images and Shrines, and gave them all external

See this confirm'd in Mede's *Apoſtacy of the later times.*

ternal expreſſions of Religious adoration The latter ſort were call'd *Baalim*, or *Belim* becauſe the firſt that was thus Canoniz'd was King *Belus* at *Babilon*, by *Ninus* his Son; and well may the Holy Ghoſt call that Church *Babilon*, which hath reviv'd that Idolatry which was firſt ſet up in that City. For is not the worſhip of Saints and Angels exactly parallel to this? Are not they exalted into the ſame place, and the ſame ſervices directed to them? Are not Temples dedicated to their honour? Images ſet up, and ſhrines conſecrated, before which their Votaries may pray unto them? Are not they worſhip'd with ſolemn invocations, and all outward ſigns of the loweſt reverence? How do the ignorant Vulgar proſtrate themſelves before their Statues? Waſh their feet with tears, and wipe them with their hair? And if the Image chance but to nod or ſmile, how do they go away rejoycing, as if they had met with their good Genius, or ſome Angel had ſaluted them from Heaven? I need not here tell what a number of Saints they have Canoniz'd, and how they have ſymboliz'd with the Heathen, in aſſigning them their particular offices; how they have Saints for every particular Nation and Country, Trade and Calling; for every ſtate and condition, for every diſeaſe of the body,

Belus

and all the accidents of humane life. I need not tell how they worſhip ſome who probably had never any other being than in their own imagination; How notoriouſly wicked perſons have been Canoniz'd; how Rebellion and Treaſon hath been accounted worthy an *Apotheoſis*; and very few have receiv'd that honour for their Religion and Loyalty. I need not tell what notorious
B blaſphemies are contain'd in their Prayers, eſpecially to the Virgin *Mary*; how ſhe is exalted to the Throne of God, and call'd the Mother of Grace, the Fountain of Salvation, the Queen of Heaven, and the Mother of the Holy Trinity. How *Bonaventure* hath Printed the Pſalter of the Bleſſed Virgin, being nothing elſe but the Pſalms of *David*, wherein whatever is ſpoken concerning God or Chriſt, either by way of Prayer, or of Praiſe, is appli'd to her. Theſe things are publickly known, and cannot be contradicted.

And we may well challenge the Heathen World, to preſent us with more daring uſurpations on the Divine Prerogative; the ſame arguments which prove the *Pagans* Idolaters for their worſhip of *Dæmons*, will equally prove the *Romaniſts* ſuch, who have exactly written after their Copy, and tranſcrib'd (that I ſay not exceeded) their iniquities;

iniquities; the same pleas which *Julian* and *Celus*, and the other defenders of the Pagan Worship us'd, are made by these pretenders to Christianity; and the same answers which *Tertullian*, and *Arnobius*, and the other primitive Fathers gave, may be very well retorted by us upon them, as will appear to any one that will but consult Dr. *Stillingfleet* in his defence of the Idolatry of the *Romish* Church. But to go no further than Scripture; Did not our Saviour repel the Devils temptation with, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*? And shall a far less consideration, than the Kingdoms of the Earth, prevail with us to fall down before Creatures, and pay them a Religious Adoration? How smartly doth St. *Paul* Argue against all Worshipping of Angels, without any of those distinctions which our Voluminous School-men have invented? Col. 2. 18. *Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen.* It seems by his discourse there were some Hereticks crept into the Church, who out of a pretence of their unworthiness to make immediate addresses to the invisible God, sued to the Angels his Courtiers and Favourites to plead their Cause. This Heresy con-

tinued a long time in *Pisidia* and *Phrygia*, where Oratories and Chappels were built to *Michael*, and the Angels, which was at last forbidden in one of the Canons of the Council of *Laodicea*. I know Cardinal *Perron* hath a very witty and singular evasion of this Text; That by the worship which was given by Angels, is meant the *Mosaical* Law; and he Translates the words, *Let no man tempt you to become proselytes of the Jews.* But why should the Apostle use such dark expressions, if this were the meaning? and what pretences of humility did they use, who perswaded to comply with the Law of *Moses*? Or how did they intrude into things they had not seen? Whereas, if the words be understood properly, these words have a very good connexion; these Hereticks pretended humility to be the occasion of their worship; and were puffed up with a conceit of their knowledg of all the Orders and Offices of Angels; nor can we imagine they worship them as Supreme Gods, but only as Gods by participation, and Advocates with the Father, as the Church of *Rome* also calls them; and therefore is equally concern'd in this prohibition. Besides, did not the Angel correct St. *John*, when out of a sudden transport, he was about to give him that reverence which bor-

der'd

er'd too near upon what the jealous God hath reſerv'd to himſelf: with a *ſee thou do it not, I am thy fellow-ſervant; worſhip God*; And ſhall we be fearleſs of the ſame Idolatry? The diſtinction of *Latria* and *Dulia* will by no means ſalve the matter; for why could not the Angel have appli'd it as well as the Angelical Doctor can? Or why could not this inſpir'd Apoſtle have pleaded that he gave him only an inferior ſubordinate worſhip, as well as the moſt illuminated Schoolman? Rev. 19. 10

'Tis of theſe Idolaters the Apoſtle ſeems to ſpeak in 1 Tim. 4. 1, 2. *Now the ſpirit ſaith expreſly*, (perhaps in Dan. 11. 36, 37, 38.) *That in the latter times ſome ſhall revolt from the faith.* Revolt by Idolatry, which is eminently call'd by that Title; *Giving heed to ſeducing Spirits, i. e.* attending to erroneous Doctrines, *Doctrines of Divels or Dæmons.* Not of which they are the Authors, but the objects; Doctrines concerning *Dæmons, i. e.* inferior Deities; *Speaking lies in hypocriſy*; or (as the Greek runs) *through the hypocriſy of liars, i. e.* Through the Deceit of lying perſons, who ſhould feign miracles, and invent fabulous ſtories to ſupport this worſhip. The event hath ſo exactly anſwer'd the Apoſtles deſcription; *Monks* (the admirers of ſingle

life, being the first Authors of Saint-Worship, which they brought in by lying-Legends, and Fictitious Miracles; that if this prophecy doth not particularly concern them, they are very unhappy to come so near the description.

3. *Their adoration of the Host, upon pretence of Transubstantiation.* This is another part of *Romish* Worship, not to be parallell'd for absurdity throughout the whole Gentile world; For to fancy that every ignorant Priest can with Five words speaking; change a piece of Bread into God; and by virtue of such a strong fancy, to give it Divine Worship, is an instance of such egregious folly, as exposes Christianity to the scorn of infidels, and hardens them in their unbelief; a Doctrine that would make a Monster of our blessed Redeemer, and give him 10000 bodies at once. A Doctrine, that subjects our Saviour to the will of every Priest, and daily renews his humiliation; A Doctrine, that makes the Covenant of Grace much more severe than the Law of Innocence, while it threatens damnation to all that will not disbelieve the agreeing sences of the whole world of Animals; A Doctrine that destroys the very Foundations of human Converse, and tends to the most unreasonable Scepticism imaginable. For if our senses

Senſes are deceiv'd in ſo plain an inſtance, how know we but that we may be all very Phantaſms, and a bundle of Accidents without any ſubſtance? A Doctrine, that hath a natural tendency to Infidelity, and is the ready road to the moſt damnable unbelief. For the miraculous Works of our Saviour, were the great convincing Evidences of the truth of Chriſtianity. *What we have ſeen and heard* (as one ſpeaks) was the Apoſtles Logick, and an appeal to Miracles, the ſureſt Demonſtraion of the Spirit. So that if our Senſes deceive us in this inſtance, our Religion it ſelf may be falſe. The Reſurrection of Chriſt, and all his wonderful Works, might, for ought we know, be Impoſtures and Deceits. Thus we ſee how naturally the Papiſt lends his Aſſiſtance to the Atheiſt and Unbeliever. A Doctrine, that calls God himſelf a Deceiver; for he plainly tells us, by the moſt certain kind of Demonſtration (to our Senſes) That here is bread; when if this be true, there is really none at all.

In a word, A Doctrine ſo full of unreaſonable Contradictions, that had not an infallible Council curs'd all deniers of it, I am perſwaded it would have long ago been renounc'd. A Doctrine contradictory to Senſe, inconſiſtent with Reaſon, and overthrown

thrown by expreſs words of Scripture. For St. *Paul* expreſly calls it Bread after Conſecration, 1 *Cor.* 10. 15, 16. 11. 26, 27. A Doctrine bottom'd only upon one Metaphorical Expreſſion. *This is my Body*; Which, how it can prove this prodigious Tranſmutation, is not very eaſie to imagine; for did not Chriſts natural Body ſpeak this, while ſitting at the Table? And could his Diſciples apprehend, they eat the ſame Body, or that the ſubſtance of the bread was vaniſh'd, and only the Accidents remaining? Did they ſo hardly believe his Reſurrection, and would they without one queſtion about it, digeſt this miracle far more amazing? Doth he not ſay, *Do this in remembrance of me?* And if the Popiſh Comment were true, would it be ſenſe, to ſay, *Eat me in remembrance of me?* Are not the terms Metaphorical in one part of the Sacrament? *This Cup is the New Teſtament in my Blood.* And why ſhould this, rather than the other, be taken according to the literal meaning? Beſides, the ſame word is us'd concerning the Paſſover, to which the *Euchariſt* ſucceeds: And the *Jews* had no term more proper to expreſs (*ſignifie*) by, than this word (*is*) *It is the Lords paſſover*, Exod. 12. 11. *i. e.* a Memorial and Signification of the Lords paſſing over the houſes of the *Iſraelites*,

raelites, when he deſtroy'd the firſt-born of *Egypt*; and why ſhould not the ſame Senſe be given of this Sacrament of the new Covenant? It is a Memorial of that Body of Chriſt which was once Offer'd for our Sins. Thus we ſee, how unreaſonable the *Roman* Expoſition of this Text is; and yet they cannot pretend any clearer proof of this great abſurdity; but it is the great deſign of this Church, to conquer thoſe three miſchievous Enemies, *Senſe*, *Reaſon*, and *Scripture*; and when they have once done that, they may impoſe what they will upon thoſe reaſonable Beaſts their followers. *Senſe*, they continually repreſent as ſubject to many Illuſions, and unfit to be truſted to in any weighty matters. *Reaſon*, they Tragically exclaim againſt, as a dangerous Weapon; and the mortifi'd Father *Creſſy* ſomewhere tells us, That it is the Wit and Judgment of Catholicks, to renounce their own Judgment, and depoſe their own Wit. *Scripture*, ſetting aſide the Authority of their Church, is of no more Validity with them, than *Æſops* Fables, or *Mahomets Alchoran*. And tho they pretend the unanimous conſent of the Fathers to their Doctrines; yet, becauſe the Teſtimonies of *Irenæus*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Theodoret*, Pope *Galaſius*, are ſo plain againſt them, they pretend,

that

that the Fathers being obſcure, the preſent Church muſt be the Judg of their meaning; but if we joyn iſſue here alſo, and agree to be judg'd by the majority of Votes in the Chriſtian World, then they very charitably damn all the World but themſelves, and aſſume the proud title of *Catholick* and *Univerſal*; ſo that the reſult of all is this; If we will not upon their bare Affirmation, ſwallow this heap of Contradictions, we muſt infallibly fall under the Council of *Lateran*'s *Anathema*, and be *ipſo facto* excommunicate.

But it is better to bear their curſes here, than by our ſinful compliance with their groſſeſt Idolatry, to endanger our Salvation for ever. For if there be no *Tranſubſtantiation*, of what tremendous Idolatry are they guilty, who pay Divine Honour to a piece of Bread, and give that Adoration to a Wafer-cake, which is due to God alone? who outdo the groſſeſt Idolatry of the Heathens, and juſtifie the moſt ridiculous Superſtitions of the Infidel world? They only believ'd that ſome inviſible Deity, incorporated it ſelf in the Creature they worſhipp'd, but never imagin'd that the whole ſubſtance was chang'd into God. A *Metamorphoſis* more ſtrange, than the moſt poetical Invention

tion could ever contrive; nor can they ſave themſelves harmleſs, by pretending they believe the Bread to be God, and therefore if they err, it is the fault of their Judgments, not of their Wills: For when men will maintain ſuch an Error in ſpite of their own Senſe, and Reaſon, and Scripture, and the plain Doctrine of the Ancient Church, they are certainly guilty of not only material, but wilful formal Idolatry. But ſuppoſing this Doctrine ſometimes; yet ſo many contingencies happens, that it is impoſſible to know whether this particular Bread be Tranſubſtantiated or not. For if the Prieſt have not a right Intention, and be not duly ordain'd, the Miracle will not follow; ſo that it is confeſſed by *Bellarmine*, that no man can have any other than a conjectural certainty, that he receives the Body of Chriſt, becauſe it depends upon the Prieſts intention, which no man can know. And now can it conſiſt with our duty (as Biſhop *Taylors* ſpeak) *certainly to give Divine Worſhip to that thing, which we cannot certainly know to have a Divine Being?* Diſſwaſ. *page* 149. But further, if we ſhould ſuppoſe (by virtue of a ſtrong faith, ſuch as is able to ſwallow Mountains) that this miracle were always perform'd, yet will not this juſtifie our Adoration.

doration. For we are not bound externally to Worſhip God, wherever he is; but only where he diſplays ſome Beams of his Glory. Therefore our Saviour teacheth us to ſay, *Our Father which art in Heaven*; Why not in Earth, Air or Sea? God is in all theſe; but Heaven is the Throne of his Glory; and therefore, thither we are to direct our Eyes and Devotions. Upon this account, ſuppoſing Chriſts humanity really preſent, he is but as a Prince in diſguiſe, and hath none of his Robes of Majeſty, and therefore expects not our religious Adoration; all that is adorable in Chriſt, is in the water of Baptiſm; there is his Godhead, Divine Perſon, and Attributes; and yet there we do not Worſhip him, and therefore are not oblig'd to do it in the *Euchariſt*, ſuppoſing his Humanity really preſent. For if his Godhead (which is of it ſelf adorable) be not worſhipp'd, where there are no Beams of Glory; much leſs is his Manhood to be Worſhipp'd (which is not of it ſelf adorable) where there are no glorious appearances of it. Thoſe therefore, who adore the Hoſt, at beſt, Worſhip God without a command; but are really groſſer Idolaters,

See this Argument largely proſecuted in Funeral of the Maſs, Chap. 5.

Idolaters than the moſt Barbarous Heathens.

4. *The manner of the* Romiſh *Worſhip too exactly ſymbolizes with the ridiculous Superſtitions of the* Heathens, *and forbidden Ceremonies of the* Jews; *and is unſuitable to the Divine Nature.* The Heathens us'd many ridiculous Ceremonies, and antick Rites, numerous Spells and Charms in their Worſhip; and *Rome*-Papal hath equall'd, if not exceeded them in her fond Superſtitions. Here I might tell of their Chriſtening Bells, and touching Beads, and charming Water, Salt and Spittle for caſting out Devils; their hallowing Medals, Swords, and *Agnus Deis*, for a ſecurity from temporal and ſpiritual Evils. Their ſtrange Actions in their Exorciſms and Conjurations; indeed their very Worſhip being in an unknown Language, looks like a Charm or Spell. I might mention their muttering over little unintelligible Prayers, numbring them by their Beads; and vain Repetitions, too like the Tautologies of the Heathens, condemn'd by our Saviour. I might further inſtance in their impos'd Penances, ſome trifling and ridiculous, others ſevere and formidable. Their Pilgrimages, walking barefoot, wearing Hair ſhirts, whipping and ſlaſhing themſelves, like the Prieſts of *Baal*, and the Wor-

Worſhippers of the other Sanguinary Heathen Deities. In their ordinary Worſhip of the *Maſs*, the Prieſt turns himſelf five times about at the Alter, to denote the five Apparitions of Chriſt; on the day of his Reſurrection, turns to the right hand, to ſignifie, that he hath a right Intention for himſelf and the people. He uſes divers ſtrange Bowings and Poſtures. Sometimes with his hands cloſe ſhut, and at other times ſpread abroad. Sometimes he cries aloud, and at other times mutters over ſome things to himſelf. Sometimes he makes as if he ſlept with his Eyes cloſe ſhut; then ſtarts up, and goes on with numerous mimical Actions, fitter for a Stage-play, than the Houſe of God. In the Sacrament of Baptiſm, the Child muſt be firſt blown upon, to drive away the Devil; Then hallow'd Salt is put in his Mouth, that he may be ſeaſon'd with Wiſdom. His Breaſt and Shoulders are anointed with holy Oyl, that he may be kept from evil Suggeſtion, and ſtrengthen'd to bear the Lords burden. His Mouth, Eyes, Ears, Noſtrils, Breaſt, and Forehead, are ſign'd with the ſign of the Croſs, that all may thereby be defended. A white Garment is put upon him, to betoken his Regeneration. A Veil on his

Stopfords Parallel, page 261.

his head, in token that he is Crown'd with a Royal Diadem. A burning Wax-candle in his hand, to fulfil that saying of our Saviour, *Let your light so shine before men*, &c. And the Priests holy Spittle (for the very Excrements of such a sacred Person must needs be holy) must be stroak'd on his Ears and Nostrils, that the one may be open'd to hear the word, and the other to discern between Good and Evil; and after all, follow the words of Institution. A bare Relation of these things is a sufficient Confutation; and the consideration of them, forc'd those honest Expressions from *Polidore Virgil*, *He that observes these things*, says he, *and is but modestly scrupulous, will say, He questions whether we imitate the Religion of the Ancient Heathens, or their Superstitions.* De Invent. lib. 5. cap. 1. These numerous mystical Rites, are perfectly opposite to the Religion of our Saviour, and tend to bring in a dry Skelleton of bodily Actions, instead of the Spiritual Worship of the Gospel. Nay, have they not gall'd the Necks of their Disciples with that heavy Yoke of *Jewish* Ceremonies, which the Apostle would not impose on the Gentile Convers? Is not superannuated Judaism restor'd, and the high Priest translated from *Jerusalem* to *Rome*?

Are not their Pilgrimages and Jubilees, burning Lamps at noon-day, and perfumes of Incense, distinction of Days, and Meats, and Rules about Fasting and Abstinence, a perfect imitation of the *Jews*? These hath the Infallible man at *Rome* reviv'd, as if he would correct the Divine Wisdom that abolish'd them; or at least, as if the Church were now in its Dotage, and again were to be rul'd like a Child or Infant. But we have not so learn'd Christ. *We are to remember, as Bishop* Taylor *speaks, That Figures and Shadows were for the* Old Testament, *but light and manifestation for the New. The* Egyptians *did indeed teach Religion by Hierogliphical Symbols; and the Schools of* Plato *and* Pythagoras, *by Numbers and Figures; but we who walk in the light of the Gospel, have an easier way of teaching the People; and are not to return to the Elements and Rituals of* Jews *and* Pagan *Schools. This manner of teaching by symbolical Actions is too low, too suspicious, too Dangerous, to be mingled with Divine Liturgies, and unbefitting the gravity and spirituality of our Religion.* Thus far he. Thus we see how they have overturn'd the first design of Christianity. Obscur'd the Light of the Gospel, and instead of that compleat Character

Ductor Dub. lib. 3. c. 4. rul. 20. s. 8.

racter of the Nature of God, and the manner of his Worſhip, laid down in Scripture, have by their Idolatry and Superſtition, given us unworthy Notions of his Attributes, and brought in that blindneſs and thick darkneſs which was mercifully chas'd away by the Sunſhine of the Goſpel.

2. They have invaded Chriſts Mediatory Office. The Chriſtian Religion diſcovers the only means of reconciling ſinful Creatures, by the Incarnation, Death, and Sufferings of the Lord Jeſus, who in purſuance of the great deſign of bringing us to Heaven; is inveſted with the Offices of King, Prieſt, and Prophet of his Church; all which the Papacy hath invaded.

1. They have invaded Chriſts Kingly Office. By this, 'tis his Prerogative to give Laws to his Church, and Chriſtians are bound to pay him the Subjection and entire Obedience of their Hearts and Lives.

If any therefore ſhall pretend a power of diſpenſing with his Laws, and untying their Obligation, of making new Articles of Faith, and condemning things plainly commanded by him. If any ſhall pretend without ſufficient Proof, a Vicarious delegated Commiſſion from him, and uſurp the place of the Univerſal Law-giver of the

World: These must be acknowledg'd to be Invaders of his Regal Office; and in how many Instances the Church of *Rome* hath been thus bold, and daringly guilty, is too well known. How many new Articles have they obtruded on our belief, since the Canon of Scripture was sealed? And how doth their Faith increase and decrease like the Moon? Tho the Apostle pronounces an *Anathema* against the highest pretended Saint or Angel, that should Preach any other Doctrine than what he had deliver'd to the *Galatians*, *Gal.* 1. 8. Yet the Conventicle of *Trent*, those professed Angels and Guardians of the Church, have levell'd their curses against all that will fear the threatnings of the Apostle, and will not receive their supplemental and corrupt Traditions with the same reverence and pious Affection that they do the Holy Scriptures. I need not tell how they have claim'd a power of dissolving the Obligation of the most Solemn Oaths and Covenants, and of allowing Marriages in forbidden degrees. How they have made Fornication a lesser Sin in a Clergy-man, than Marriage; tho the one be the Ordinance of God, and never prohibited to any company of men; and the other forbidden by the very Law of Nature. I need not tell how the Pope hath

hath uſurp'd the Office of Univerſal Biſhop, and Vicar of Chriſt; tho Pope *Gregory* ſeverely reflected upon *John* of *Conſtantinople* for affecting ſuch a Titile, and call'd it the badg of Antichriſt. I need not tell how they have added five other Sacraments, to thoſe two inſtituted by our Saviour; what a number of Church-Officers they have inſtituted, unknown in Scripture, and the pureſt Ages of the Church: Nor how they have Lorded it over the Conſciences of men, by rigorouſly impoſing numerous burdenſome Ceremonies, which change the ſpiritual Worſhip of the Goſpel, and alter its very Nature. 'Tis confeſs'd that Governours have a Power of impoſing indifferent things; and whatever tends to the more orderly and decent Adminiſtration of the Worſhip of God, may be the object of their command. But when theſe are either vain and uſeleſs, or indecent in their own Nature, or burdenſome for their number; when they are impos'd as parts of Worſhip, and neceſſary to Salvation: When they obſcure the Worſhip of God, and are more like the ſhadows of the Law, than becoming the light of the Goſpel; ſuch Impoſitions are Acts of Tyranny and Uſurpation. I ſhall conclude this head, with the mention of one more bold, tho acknowledg'd Invaſion of

the Regal Office of Christ, and that is, their half Communions.

They have snatcht away the Cup in the *Eucharist* from the People, and ingross'd it to the Clergy. This was establish'd as an Article of the *Romish* Faith, at the Council of *Constance*, and afterwads confirm'd at *Trent*. The chief remarkable Causes are these, *Seeing that in divers parts of the World, there be some, who rashly presume to say, That Christian People ought to receive the* Eucharist *under both kinds; this present Holy General Council, being desirous to provide for the safety of the faithful, doth decree, That tho Jesus Christ did Administer the venerable Sacrament in both kinds, and tho in the primitive Church, the faithful did so receive it; yet notwithstanding, this custom ought to be kept*, i. e. *that the Priest that says Mass, shall communicate under both species of Bread and Wine, but the Lay people under that of Bread only, and they that say the contrary, let them be expell'd as Hereticks, and grievously punish'd by the Bishop and his Officials.* How horrible a Canon is this, and what a notorious Usurpation of Christs Prerogative? They accuse of Rashness, Error, and Heresie, all who dare (by their own Confession) imitate Christ and his Apostles, and the Primitive Church; for this only reason, some have been burnt at a

Stake,

Stake, and it was an occasion of cruel Wars and Bloodshed in *Germany*. They indeed pretend this to be an indifferent circumstance, to be continued, or remov'd at the Churches pleasure. But why should this be more indifferent than the Bread? Hath not Christ more expresly commanded the drinking the one, than receiving the other? *Drink ye all of it*, says he, as if he foresaw and design'd to prevent this great Corruption. And to argue, *ad hominem*, our Saviour tells us, Joh. 6. 53. *Except ye drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life in you.* These words, if understood of the *Eucharist*, as the *Romanists* pretend, prove the absolute Universal necessity of communicating under both kinds. So that, either this great prop of *Transubstantiation* must be deserted, or their half *Communion* condemn'd.

2. They have invaded Christs Priestly Office. By this he hath fully satisfi'd Divine Justice, by giving himself a compleat Sacrifice for our Offences, and procur'd for us the pardon of Sin, the Graces of the Spirit, and eternal Happiness, upon Condition of sincere Obedience to his Laws; and now is enter'd into Heaven, and is by vertue of this Sacrifice our powerful Intercessor at the Right hand of God. This Office also, is

ſhameſully invaded by thoſe of the *Romiſh* Church; and that in theſe following inſtances.

1. By their proud doctrine of Merit. Tho the Scriptures fully declare, that by grace we are ſaved, and eternal life is the free gift of God: tho our reaſons may convince us, that a Creature (how innocent ſoever) can deſerve nothing at his Creators hands; tho a little reflection upon our ſelves, will diſcover many ſpots in our faireſt vertues, many blemiſhes in our beſt duties, many imperfections in our moſt religious exerciſe, many ſinful mixtures in our moſt unpolluted actions, and great defects in our beſt obedience: yet do theſe men boaſt of their good works, and account them not only ſpotleſs, but meritorious too: but if all this zeal for good works (as one well obſerves) were deſigned to advance an holy life, the nobleneſs of the deſign might a little excuſe the fault: but alas! thoſe works which they moſt extol, are either pieces of will-worſhip, that tend only to advance the Secular intereſt of their Church, as Pilgrimages, building Abbys, enriching Monaſteries, &c. or elſe are ſuch actions as we think to be daring ſins; as murdering *Hereticks*, and perſons coldly affected to the *Catholick Cauſe*. Thus 'tis ſtoried concerning Cardinal

Cardinal *Richelieu*, that great Politician of *France*, that when he lay upon his death-bed, his Confessor came to him to perform the last offices of charity, and urged him to a full confession of all his sins; the *Cardinal* mention'd only some little petty crimes, and told him those were all he could recollect; at which the Confessor started, saying, Surely this sickness hath rob'd your Grace of your memory: for we who have been plac'd in a lower sphere, have observ'd many actions of a far deeper Dye: and then mention'd many Murders committed by his procurement. Oh (says the Cardinal) those persons were disaffected to the Catholick Interest, and these are my good deeds with which I intend to present my Saviour. A story that needs no other invective than the bare relation. But I would not willingly accuse all, while some only are liable to this charge. For many *Romish* Doctors mean no more by merit, than that obligation God hath by promise laid upon himself, to reward our good works. And this I think none that understand the Nature of the Divine Promises can gainsay. These men we accuse only for the use of a proud improper term; tho once us'd by the ancient Fathers in an innocent sence.

2. *By*

2. *By their Doctrine of penance and Purgatory.* Whereas the Scripture tells us, that Christ hath pai'd down a compleat Ransom for our sins, and it is through his Blood alone we can expect a freedom from the punishments we have deserved; yet this Church hath Coind new distinctions between the temporary and eternal punishments of sin; as if tho the latter be remov'd by the Blood of Christ, the former must be satisfi'd for by our selves either in this Life or in Purgatory. To this end they have given the Priests a commission to injoyn penances for sin as satisfactions to Divine Justice, and preventive of further punishment. Penances so Ludicrous and Trifling, that it is a sign of great infatuation in any that can believe by such cheap and easy performances, to appease the anger of an offended Deity. Penances consisting of little observances; such as numbering their Prayers by their Beads, saying so many *Avemaries* at some priviledg'd Altars: in abstaining from Flesh for so many days, in whipping their bodies, in wearing hair-shirts, and the cords of the particular Orders, and numerous other little pieces of folly and superstition. By these means do they take off sinners from their grateful love and duty to the Redeemer, and earnest believing-applications to the Lord Jesus, who

who is appointed by the Father, as the ſole Mediator of his Church, and through whom alone we can expect deliverance from puniſhments, whether temporal or eternal. Of the ſame nature is their Doctrine of Purgatory; a ſtate of torments in the other world, equal in degree, tho not in continuance to thoſe of Hell: wherein thoſe ſouls muſt fry who have not ſatisfi'd for their ſins here, till their friends give money to the Prieſt to pray them thence. By this means the intereſts of the Clergy are advanc'd, and the grandeur of that Church promoted. This hath enrich'd their Abbies, adorn'd their Chappels, fill'd their Coffers, and made good proviſion for all the begging Orders among them. For while they ſcar'd the people with ſuch a terrible Doctrine, and yet pretended a power of Praying them thence; who would not give liberally to thoſe who were able to deliver them from ſuch extremity of torment? A Doctrine which the honeſter of their Doctors acknowledg, is not to be found in Scripture; and theſe who pretend to prove it thence, have brought ſuch lame and farfetch'd proofs as are as eaſily refuted as mention'd; the only Text that can with the leaſt probability be ſtretch'd to this ſenſe, is that of 1 Cor. 3. 15. *He himſelf ſhall be ſav'd, yet ſo as by fire*: But this

this is but a proverbical ſpeech, and by the context the meaning plainly appears to be, that he who holding the eſſentials of Chriſtianity ſhall corrupt it by additions of other diſagreeing Doctrines, is in a very hazardous condition; and tho his ſalvation is poſſible, yet it is but as a mans, whoſe houſe is on fire about his ears, extreamly dubious and very uncertain; which how applicable to the *Romaniſts*, hath been excellently ſhowed by others, and will further appear by this diſcourſe. But were there ſuch a place as this, what a derogation is it to the blood and prerogative of Chriſt, to think that money can procure a Releaſe from thence? The *Pſalmiſt*, I am ſure, tells us that *they who truſt in their wealth, and boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches: none of them can redeem his brother, or pay to God a Ranſom for him.* *Pſal.* 49. 6. 7. But this is but Old-Teſtament-Divinity, and Purgatory hath been built ſince that time; or rather the infallible Head of the Church will not be guided by the Laws of the Bible.

For tho St. *Peter* would not ſell the gifts of the Spirit for Money, yet a fair purchaſe of eternal Life may be bought of his Succeſſor, if God would as willingly conſent as he. And we may invert St. *Peters* words, and apply them to the *Romaniſts*, 1 Pet. 1. 18. *They*

are

are bought with corruptable things, and redeem'd by silver and gold, from the imaginary flames of Purgatory, tho not from that vain conversation receiv'd by tradition from their Fathers. But we have not so learn'd Christ. Scripture mentions but two places, *Heaven* and *Hell*; if we lead Pious and Holy lives, we may receive death with a joyful welcome, and need not allay our comforts by the fears of an after-reckoning in another world. And tho we may have been guilty of many venial sins in a Gospel-sense, through infirmity, surprise, and sudden temptation, or of any more mortal ones of a deeper die; yet upon our sincere repentance, the Blood of Christ, (without the fire of Purgatory) will cleanse us from all these, and present us pure and spotless to the Father. But if we die in an impenitent state, we shall be presently doom'd to endless remediless torments, and all the wealth of the *Indies* will never procure us a deliverance thence: I might further mention their practice of selling Indulgences for money, which happily occasioned the reformation by *Luther*. By this they they have made easy composition for sins, and the *Taxa Cameræ Apostolicæ*, a book publickly printed amongst them, sets down at what easy rates an absolution may be obtained for the most unnatural vices.

Now

Now what a direct tendency hath this to make men set light by their sins, tread under foot the blood of the Son of God, and account the death and sufferings of the Lord Jesus perfectly unnecessary?

3. *By their doctrine of the sacrifice of the Mass, as a formal expiation of the living and dead.* Tho the Apostle to the *Hebrews* makes the great excellence of Christs sacrifice above those of the *Levitical* Law, to consist in this, That it was so full and compleat, that it needs no repetition; *Heb.* 10. 12, 14. Yet the *Romanists* have made it a great part of their Religion to offer him every day in the Mass, as a propitiatory proper sacrifice, and thus make his former sacrifice on the cross incompleat and imperfect, or rather wholly unnecessary; for Christ instituted the Sacrament before his passion; and if he then offer'd up himself as a propitiation for our sins, what need was there at all of his bloody death and passion. It is acknowledged that the Eucharist may be called a sacrifice in the same improper sense, as our prayers, and alms-deeds, and repentances are called so in Scripture; and if they will call it a commemorative sacrifice, as it is a memorial of Christs once perfect offering up himself on the cross; Or even a Propitiatory sacrifice, as it is a means of propitiating

pitiating the Divine favour, and ſeals and exhibits to us the real benefits purchaſed by his death; we need not quarrel about words if this be their only ſenſe And indeed as Biſhop *Andrews* ſomewhere ſpeaks, take away Tranſubſtantiation, and the conceit of Purgatory, and this wordy controverſy would quickly be ended.

4. *By their formal Invocation of Saints.* The Scripture teaches us, that there is but one Mediator between God and man, the man Chriſt Jeſus; and that none might pretend there may be other Mediators of interceſſion, tho not of Redemption, the Apoſtle hath prevented that diſtinction, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1.—4 compar'd; where the Apoſtle urges us to pray for all men, becauſe all of whatſoever Nation or Condition in the world are intereſted in Chriſts interceſſion. He is the only Mediator that prevailingly intercedes for us in Heaven. To make creatures the objects of our formal invocation, what is it but to make them competitors with Chriſt, and ſhare in his prerogative? We may as well aſcribe redemption to others, as interceſſion. Beſides, what a diſparagement is it to his Love, that when he hath given us the largeſt aſſurances of his kindneſs, and ready acceptances of our prayers, and graciouſly promis'd that if we put our confi-

dence

dence in him, he will be our Advocate, and we ſhall have a gracious anſwer from Heaven: Nay when God the Father hath declar'd, that whatever we ask in the Name of the Lord Jeſus ſhall be granted: I ſay, how do we diſparage his love by begging others to plead our Cauſe? Can we imagine? that the ſervants of God can do more for us, than his beloved Son? Or the bleſſed Virgin, than the Lord Jeſus? He that looks into the *Roman* Rituals, indeed may be tempted to think ſo, where ten *Avemaries* are preſcrib'd to one *Paternoſter*: and they have pictur'd Chriſt as frowning upon ſinners, and driving them away from him; but the Virgin *Mary* inviting them with her ſmiles, and lending a willing ear to their Devotions. But he that looks into Scripture, there finds nothing of this nature. We are never directed to put our confidence in man; but curſes denounc'd againſt thoſe that do ſo: The Saints in Heaven, are there never made the objects of our Prayers; and it was always thought by the Primitive Church, a good Argument againſt the *Arriant*, that Chriſt is God, becauſe we are directed to addreſs our ſelves to him. Whether the Saints Pray for us or no in Heaven, is not the queſtion; and while we underſtand not the extent of their knowledg, it will remain a doubt, *Luk.* 15.7.

15. 7. Those who rejoyce at the conversion of a sinner, may perhaps as far as they know our condition, pray for their militant fellow-members: *Rev.* 6. 9, 10. And those who so passionately desire that vengeance may be executed on the Churches enemies, may reasonably be thought as earnest for the salvation of their friends. But this their intercession is not (as the *Romanists* pretend) like the Lord Jesus's, by presenting their merits in our behalf; nor hath God given them power to pardon our sins, heal our diseases, supply our wants, or save our Souls; and yet for such things as these, are prayers directed to them; nor is there any warrant from hence for us to make them our Mediators, and pray unto them. For tho they may know such things concerning us, whereby their own happiness and comfort may be increas'd: yet that they should understand all the particular grievances and concernments of our lives, hear our prayers, or know our hearts, is not to be imagin'd. And when we use the same gestures of external adoration to them, that we do to our Saviour, we thereby make them copartners with him in the same honour, and rivals to him in his dignity.

3. They have invaded Christs Prophetical office. By this, he hath reveal'd the

whole will of God unto us: and that we might not be deceiv'd by the ſubtilties of ſeducers, Commiſſion'd his inſpir'd Apoſtles to commit his precepts to writing in the Holy Scripture, that this might be our ſtanding rule. According to this we are bound to walk; and whatever Doctrines or practices are not agreeable to it, muſt be diſown'd. This Office is alſo invaded by the *Roman* Church, and moſt eminently by theſe following ways.

1. By hiding the Scripture from the common people, and to juſtify this practiſe, accuſing it of obſcurity. 'Tis well known how they have forbid the Scriptures to be Read in the vulgar language, and by terrible curſes and Anathema's have ſcar'd their Lay-proſelytes from this admirable guide to happineſs. How have they lock'd up this bread of life, and ingroſs'd this ſacred Manna to themſelves! How have they inclos'd this well of Salvation, and churliſhly refus'd their Laity ſo much as a taſt of the purer ſtreams, except they will take in the mud and filth, and their own impure mixtures alſo. Their people muſt be content with the crumbs which the Clergy are pleas'd to let fall: and be ſatisfi'd with only a glimmering of that light which would clearly

clearly direct them to the paths of Life. The Scriptures, like the rising Sun, would quickly dispel the darkness of error, and their former ignorance: and therefore the proud Prelates resolve to stop this Giant in his race, and hinder him from scattering his Beams in the World: But alas, what an high affront and daring indignity is this, to the great Prophet of the Church? That when he descended from his Fathers Bosom for this very end, that he might discover the mind and will of God unto us; took such unwearied pains to publish his Doctrine; strengthend it by such amazing Miracles, and inspired his Apostles, that they might commit to writing this his last Testament and admirable Legacy: I say, what a Monstrous piece of Ingratitude is it, to hide it from the sight of those to whom it is consign'd by our Lord? And that by them who pretend to be the Guardians of it, and the Executors of their departed Saviour? Such an Action might be more excusable in *Julian* or *Diocletian*; but for the Vicar of Christ to be Guilty of it, is a crime sufficient to forfeit his Title, and tempts us to believe him Antichrist. Was the Scripture first Preach'd, and afterwards written in a Language capable of being Universally understood? And is there not as much necessity

it ſhould be ſo continued? Did God command the *Jews* to be frequent in the Meditation of the Law? To lodg it in their thoughts, to make it their daily companion, and the ſubject of their conſtant entertainment? And hath he any where forbidden the uſe of the Goſpel? To delight in the Law of the Lord, and to Meditate therein day and night, was once the Character of a Bleſſed Man. And is the ſcene ſo much chang'd, that now it is become the black mark of a damnable Heretick? The Prophets permitted the People to judg by the Scriptures, which were true, and which were counterfeit meſſengers from Heaven, crying out, *to the Law, and to the Teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this word, 'tis becauſe there is no light in them!* And muſt we acknowledg theſe men for the Pillars of Truth, and the Lights of the World, without being allow'd the ſame liberty? When our Saviour was ask'd by that young man, *what ſhall I do that I may inherit eternal life*? Our Lord anſwers him, *what ſaith the Law*? *How Readeſt thou*? And ſhall ignorance be now accounted the ſureſt

Deut. 11. 18, 19, 20.

Pſal. 1. 1, 2.

Iſa. 8. 20.

Road

Road to Heaven? *Search the Scripture*, was his precept, but is the prohibition of the *Romiſh* Church. *Timothy* and the *Bereans* were indeed commended by St. *Luke* and St. *Paul*, as noble perſons for their diligence in the Scriptures: But if they had liv'd in the days of our Modern Saints, this would have been thought a crime deſerving the laſh of the inquiſition. An *Anathema* would have been their ſpiritual reward, and fire and faggot their civil recompence. Certainly ſuch a practice as this, had need be back'd with good Apologies, or elſe they will never be able to juſtify ſo great an abuſe of the Lord Jeſus. But how weak are their pleas! and how inſignificant the excuſes they make! Is it becauſe the People may wreſt the Scripture to their perdition, that they are forbidden their uſe? Alas! becauſe ſome may abuſe it, muſt all therefore be depriv'd of it? becauſe ſome may make Scripture the ſupport of their errors, muſt it not therefore be the foundation of truth? Becauſe ſome dogs have trampled on the Bread of Life, Muſt the Children therefore be withheld from their Spiritual Food? Becauſe Hereticks have taken too large draughts of the new Wine of the Goſpel, muſt all therefore be denied to taſt of it? Becauſe ſome know not the worth of theſe Pearls, muſt

thoſe therefore who know how to value them, be hinder'd from their poſſeſſion? By the ſame reaſon the Scriptures ſhould not be permitted in the Learned Languages; for Learned Men have been generally the firſt broachers of Hereſy, and are moſt capable of perverting the Holy Writings. Is it becauſe Scripture is ſo obſcure, that if the common people did injoy it, they could not underſtand it? 'Tis acknowledged, there are myſteries in our Religion, and God hath for wiſe ends left ſome things more dark and obſcure, to awaken our induſtry, abate our Pride, and ſhow the moſt Learned, his ignorance and infancy in knowledg; and create in us all, earneſt longings after that Happy ſtate, where all the Riddles ſhall be unfolded, and the myſteries clearly reveal'd. But there is ſo much perſpicuouſly laid down, as is neceſſary to Salvation; and every man that Reads it, and ſincerely endeavours to underſtand it, ſhall with the help of Divine Grace, arrive at ſo much Knowledg, as if improv'd into practice, will bring him to Heaven. The great end why the Scripture was written, was, that we might have a conſtant Monitor of our duty, and guide to happineſs; now if the Scripture were ſo obſcure that it anſwer'd not

2 *Tim.* 3. 16.

not this end, this would reflect upon the Divine Wisdom, as if he had chosen an insufficient means, and were defeated in his methods and expectations. And it would equally reflect upon his goodness, as if he envied his creatures happiness, if after our sincere and humble endeavours, we could not understand the things that are necessary to our Salvation. The essentials are clearly reveal'd; tho there be some obscure passages, yet the Divine Goodness hath left them, not that we should be debar'd from Reading, but to prevent our loathing and contempt: and the darkest phrases are incomparably more intelligible than the cloudy obscurities of their admired Authors. The pious nonsence of Mother *Juliana*, and the sanctifi'd gibberish of their mystical Divines, are infinitely less perspicuous than the Prophecies of *Daniel*, or mysteries of the *Revelations*. And yet those which reflect on Christianity, as if it consisted only in *Enthusiastick* heats and raprures, are allow'd, while the Scripture which gives so lovely a description of the Christian Religion must be shut up from the sight of the multitude. But whatever slender pretences may be us'd to delude perverse Hereticks, we have good ground to think, that the true cause of this Restraint, is the same which

our Saviour mentions, Joh. 3. 19. *They love darkneſs rather than light, becauſe their deeds are evil.* Should the Scriptures be read by all, their Proſelytes would be few, and their Altars would no longer ſmoke; the Grandeur of the Church muſt be abated, the infallible Chair would totter, and *Rome* would be no longer the Miſtreſs of the Earth.

2. Their pretence of Infallibility, and the Scriptures dependance on the Authority of their Church. This is another Invaſion on Chriſts Prophetical Office. For if Infallibility be lodg'd in either Pope or Council (for they are not agreed where it is plac'd) then tho Chriſt hath never ſo clearly explain'd his mind, they may make what Expoſitions of his words they pleaſe, and obtrude them on our belief. Their great Champion *Bellarmine* aſſerts, That if the infallible Head ſhould condemn Vertue for Vice, and commend Vice as Vertue; we are bound to believe Vice as morally good, and Virtue evil; but if this be Goſpel, our great Maſter hath deceiv'd us, and we have been led by our Saviour into an Error. Then if that impure Cardinal, that writ a Book in praiſe of the ſcarlet Sin of *Sodom*, had been exalted to the Papal-chair, and from thence proclaim'd that unnatural Vice to be morally good, we ſhould

ſhould have been bound to believe it. And tho ſome pretend that ſuch a Suppoſition is not to be made, becauſe the Spirit of truth will guide the unerring Head into all truth; yet, ſad experience hath taught us, that the broadeſt Impieties have been canonized, and miſcal'd Virtue and Juſtice at *Rome*. Beſides, what poſſible reaſon is there, they ſhould be ſecur'd from Error more than from Sin? How can it be imagin'd that that Holy Spirit, which is griev'd with impurity, and will not dwell in the Habitations of uncleanneſs, did infallibly aſſiſt thoſe Monſters for Villany, which are acknowledg'd by *Baronius* and *Platina* to have worn the Triple Crown in the ninth and tenth Centuries?

Surely if ſuch a gift as this was ever given to the Guides of the Church; How obſcure ſoever the Scripture be in other things, it will be highly neceſſary it ſhould plainly lay down this important Doctrine. But alas! How impertinent are the Proofs they bring! They are either ſuch as will equally prove the Civil Magiſtrates, and Judges in *Weſtminſter-Hall* infallible: Such is that, *Deut.* 17. 10, 11, 12. Where Judges are appointed to decide matters of Difference between man and man, to whoſe Deciſions the People are bound to agree, that their Striſes might not

be

be endleſs, or ſuch as are reſtrain'd to the Apoſtles themſelves. Such is that, *Mat.* 16. 19. *I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatſoever thou bindeſt on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven; and whatſoever thou looſeſt on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven.* The plain meaning of which words ſeems to be only this. I will give thee the the priviledg of firſt opening the Goſpel (frequently call'd the Kingdom of Heaven) and whatſoever parts of *Moſes*'s Law thou bindeſt to the Obſervation of, or takeſt off the Obligation, (for ſo the Phraſes of binding and looſing are generally us'd in the *Jewiſh* Writers) ſhall be obſerv'd and forborn. God will ratifie and confirm what thou eſtabliſheſt. Accordingly we know St. *Peter* did firſt Preach the Goſpel to the *Jews*, in *Acts* 2. and to the *Gentiles*, *Acts* 10. And this priviledg of binding and looſing was peculiar to him and the other Apoſtles. Laſtly, Their proofs are ſuch as agree to every particular Church, and faithful Chriſtian. Thus that of *Matt.* 18. 17. Speaks only of a Juriſdiction in every Church for quieting differences among the Members of it. And that other of Matt. 16. 18. *The gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt the Church.* For by the Gates of Hell may

Vide Lightfoot, *in locum.*

be

be either understood the crafts and policies of Hell (Councils using to sit in the Gates of Cities) shall not totally prevail; There shall be a body of Christians in the World, or the Translation should be mended, and the words read (the Gates of the Grave, or the invisible State) Death, which is frequently call'd among the *Greeks* by that name, shall not gain Victory over the Church, over the particular Persons of which it consists; tho they dye, yet Christ will rescue them by a glorious Resurrection. Death shall not have Dominion over them, nor over the Church; notwithstanding its many Enemies; it shall not perish totally or irrecoverably. These are the best proofs of their Infallibility, I can find in the Scripture; and while they are so easily and naturally applicable to a different sense, I cannot think a Doctrine so obscurely deliver'd in the Christian Rule, to be any Articles of the Christian Faith. Besides, what use do they make of this gift they pretend to? Have they oblig'd the World by an infallible Comment on all the difficult places in Scripture, and put a final end to all controversies among themselves? On the contrary, have not some Popes profess'd their no skill in Divinity, and infallible Councils contradicted each other? Are not

there

there violent disputes between the *Franscicans* and *Dominicans*, *Jansenists* and *Jesuits*, *French* and *Italian* Clergy? Surely the Pope must be very regardless of the Peace of the Church, who will not give an infallible discovery of the truth. And if ever God did give this gift, since the Apostles days, he may have long since justly taken it away, because they have hid their Talent, and made no use of it. And now I have weaken'd this pretence, the other of the Scriptures dependance on the Authority of their Church falls of it self; for if their Church be not infallible, why should I believe the Scriptures to be Gods Word, meerly because they say so, any more than *Mahomets Alchoran*? 'Tis true, the Testimony of their Church, jointly with all other Christians in the World, and the Confession of *Jews* and Heathens, handed down to us by the most unquestionable historical Tradition, is a great Confirmation, that these were the Books indicted by the Apostles, that they were confirm'd by various Miracles, and are not corrupted in any material Articles; but we believe their Divine Authority, not because the Church says so, but because of those Seals which God hath affix'd to them. We have convincing Arguments enough, of the Scriptures Divinity, and need not

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go to *Rome*, to know what they mean. Christ hath fully prov'd, that his Message is from God, by the excellence of his Doctrines, the accomplishment of Prophecies, and numerous miraculous Works; and we will not forsake these firm foundations of our Faith, and be so unreasonably credulous, as to believe the same things meerly upon the Affirmation of a company of the worst sorts of Christians in the World. Thus have they dangerously invaded the Offices of Christ. I proceed to

3. They have corrupted the excellent Rules of an holy Life contain'd in the Gospel. The great design of the Christian Religion is, to purifie and amend the World, and reduce it to its primitive Innocence. And I wish there were less occasion to think, that the design of these men is to Debauch the World, and show that it is possible to be more corrupt than the very Heathens themselves; for have not they by their nice distictions, render'd a holy Life a very needless thing, and overturn'd the very foundations of Virtue and Morality? Repentance, that first Introduction to an holy Life, consisting in such a hearty Sorrow for every Sin, as influences the practice, and disposes us to forsake them, they have made utterly unnecessary. For while they

distinguish

distinguish Sins into Mortal and Venial, and impose very easie Penances for those of the most purple dye: Is not this the way to tempt their Proselytes to a continuance in their Sins, and keep them from that severe hatred of them, and those firm Resolutions of forsaking them, they ought to take up? Besides, they maintain that a slight Attrition, and imperfect Sorrow for Sin, meerly from the consideration of some temporal inconvenience, if join'd with the Sacrament of Penance, is sufficient to fit a man for Heaven, so that it is a very needless thing to hate or forsake our evil ways; This is desin'd by their Council of *Trent*, and generally maintain'd by their most famous *Casuists*. And *Morinus* tells us, as I find him quoted by Dr. *Stillingfleet*, * *That the excellence of the Evangelical Precepts above the Legal, chiefly consists in this, That by them we are freed from the heavy yoke of Contrition and Love to God.* A Speech that would better become a Turk or Heathen, than a Christian. Thus we see they have hinder'd the first entrance into an holy Life, and made the Gate to Heaven wider, and the passage much more easie than our Saviour or his Apostles. And if we run over all the parts of our

* Preface to Answer to several Treatises.

our Duty, we may find too plain a Contradiction among their *Casuists*. If we examine the Duties of Piety towards God; How necessarily must they have low and irreverent thoughts of his imcomprehensible Majesty, who behold such scandalous Pictures of him in their Churches, and see the same Devotions and Gestures of Adoration us'd to those who were once, perhaps, equally sinful Creatures with themselves? How have they incourag'd an abuse of his sacred Name, by their Doctrine of Equivocation; and prophan'd his Holy Day, by allowing the remains of that time, that is not spent at Mass, to be imploy'd in idle Sports, and foolish Mirth? How have they destroy'd that trust we ought to place on God alone, by teaching men to rely on Creatures; and damp'd well-grounded hopes of Heaven, by unreasonable fears of Purgatory? How have they taken off all necessity of Faith in Christ, by their Doctrine of implicite Faith; and while they teach the salvability of Heathens, will not allow that any Christian can be sav'd, who is not a Subject to the Pope? and thus a belief in him, is more necessary than in the Lord Jesus. I might give many instances out of their *Casuists*, how they make it unnecessary to love God above once a year;

and

and if they say their Prayers, no matter whether they attend to them or no. The Duties of Justice and common Honesty, are as perfectly overthrown by the nice Distinctions of *Rome*. Their maintaining it lawful to exercise Revenge, and Kill him that hath injur'd us in Honour, Goods, or Reputation, is certainly no way own'd by our Saviour, who commands us to love our Enemies, and do good to them that hate us; by no means to avenge our selves, but to *overcome evil with good*. That Latitude of uncleanness, and immodesty allow'd in their Books, is but a very bad Comment upon that Text. *He that looks upon a Woman, to Lust after her, hath committed Adultry already with her in his heart.* Neither were they ever incourag'd by him, who said, *Thou shalt not forswear thy self*, to falsifie their Oaths, or violate their Faith with Hereticks. The great pattern of meekness and compassion, that check'd his Disciples fiery zeal against the *Samaritans* with, *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of*; Never encourag'd their envenom'd rage against Dissenters from them; Never encourag'd their Gibbets, Stakes, or Inquisition. Nor did he command that all should be tortur'd with the most bloody Cruelty, who are so obstinately sullen, as

to

to refuſe to ſtoop to a Wafer-Cake, and believe their own ſenſes before his Holineſs. They have turn'd Nupitals into Maſſacres, and at the concluſion of Wedding-Feaſts have not tranſubſtantiated, but exchang'd Wine for Blood. They have treacherouſly murder'd thouſands of Innocents, and blaſphemouſly ſung praiſes to God, as if he were the Author of thoſe Villanies which are highly-diſpleaſing to him, and abominably odious in his ſight.

The Goſpel teaches us to maintain the moſt diffuſive unbounded Charity towards all the world; but they have confin'd their love within the Walls of *Rome*. And like the *Phariſees* of old, will allow no Salvation to any other Chriſtians, that will not ſubmit to the uſurpations of their High-Prieſt and Sanhedrim. The Chriſtian Religion is deſign'd to abate our pride, and cure our ſelf-iſhneſs: But the great deſign of theſe men, is to aggrandize their Church, and promote the Secular intereſts of the Clergy. Heavenly-mindedneſs and ſelf-denial is every where urg'd in the Goſpel: But that the great corruptions for which we accuſe the Church of *Rome*, do plainly aim at a worldly intereſt, may eaſily appear by an induction of the particulars I have alrea-

dy diſcours'd of. And tho there are many Cloyſter'd Votaries among them, that make great boaſts of their mortification, who pretend to bid adieu to the world, and all its flattering vanities, who pretend to ſpend their whole time in devotion, and dreſſing their Souls for Heaven: yet all this may be a juggle and cheat to blind the world; Phariſaical, and not Evangelical. And if we might be allow'd to ſearch their Cells and Abbeys, we might perhaps find they have been more careful to lay up Treaſures on Earth, than Heaven. true Mortification is chiefly inward, but theirs is moſtly in externals. Their Religion lies no deeper than their skins; and tho the Apoſtle tells us, that this bodily exerciſe profiteth little; yet they make it the very ſum of their ſelf-denial. Thus have they Evacuated the great duties of our Religion. And tho I cannot ſay that all theſe are Doctrines defin'd by their Councils, and in that ſenſe to be ſubſcrib'd to by all that Communion; Yet they are publickly Printed by their Caſuiſts; and the order of Jeſuites, who moſt propagate them, are moſt encourag'd. And while a denier of Tranſubſtantiation ſhall be Sacrific'd to the Flames, theſe debauchers of the World, enjoy the beſt Eccleſiaſtical Promotions. I might

might have enlarg'd in further inſtances; but he that deſires more, may read enough to turn his ſtomach in *Taylors* Diſſwaſive from Popery, the Practical Divinity of the Papiſts; to omit the Myſtery of Jeſuitiſm, and the Jeſuits Morals. He that Reads thoſe collections out of their own Authors, will find, that the Pious and Judicious Dr. *Tillotſon* did not go beyond the bounds of his wonted moderation, when he us'd theſe ſeemingly harſh expreſſions

'* I ſpeak it with grief (ſays 'he) and ſhame, becauſe the 'credit of our common Chri-'ſtianity is ſome way concern'd in it; That '*Panætius*, and *Antipater*, and *Diogenes* the '*Stoick*; *Tully*, and *Plutarch*, and *Seneca*, were 'much honeſter and more Chriſtian Caſuiſts 'than the Jeſuits, or the generality of the Ca-'ſuiſts of any other Order that I know of in 'the Church of *Rome*.

* *Sermon on 5th* Nov.-78.

Thus have I appli'd the firſt ſenſe of theſe words to theſe men: and I think ſufficiently proved, That they have overturned the whole deſign of the Goſpel. I proceed therefore to inquire, Whether they can produce any divine commiſſion for theſe great alterations they have made. Are their Doctrines reaſonable? or have they any intrin-

ſick excellence to commend them? The Doctrines of the Apoſtles were highly reaſonable, and their worth and excellence attracted every unprejudic'd perſon. But theirs are plainly abſur'd and irrational; ſuch as none but the wilfully blind and reſolvedly obſtinate can believe. For is it reaſonable to worſhip the incomprehenſible God, by Images of Wood and Stone? and to give the ſame veneration to Creatures, that we do to the Lord of Angels and Men? Is it reaſonable to adore a Wafer-cake, or imagine that the charming words of a Prieſt, can fetch down the Body of Chriſt from Heaven, and convey away the Bread in an inſtant? Is it reaſonable to believe, that Chriſts Body may be in a thouſand places at once? that it may be divided, not into parts, but wholes, and crowded into every crumb of the conſecrated Wafer? Is it reaſonable to believe theſe and a 1000 more fulſome contradictions which that hard word *Tranſubſtantiation* implies? Is it reaſonable to worſhip a ſpiritual Being, with gay ceremonies, and all the little pieces of foppery us'd in their worſhip? Is it reaſonable to believe, that God ſhould be ſo fond of the City of *Rome*, that the Biſhop thereof, tho never ſo notori-

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ous for ignorance and villany, shall become infallible? Is it reasonable to believe, that Absolution can change Attrition into effectual Repentance, and the Omnipotent Words of a Priest conjure a man to Heaven in an instant? But the world knows how the Jesuit *Veronius* hath implicitely confess'd Reason not to be on their side, who presented the world with a new method more promising than ordinary to convince Hereticks, and that was, to call for express words of Scripture, and absolutely deny whatever reason said against any of the Articles of their new Belief. And now since their Doctrines are thus confessedly unreasonable, we may be assur'd they came not from Heaven, or the God of Reason.

2. Are their Doctrines warranted by any Prophecies concerning them? The Apostles compleated those Prophecies that had been long before made. God had foretold his abolishing the Ceremonial Law, and establishing a perfect standing-rule for *Jews* and *Gentiles*. But doth he any where foretell, That after the expiration of so many Years, *Judaism* and *Paganism* should be mix'd together by his appointment? On the contrary, the Gospel is call'd an everlasting

Gospel; and at the closing of
Rev. 22. 18. the Canon of Scripture, a terrible curse is denounc'd against those who should dare to make any additions to Scripture. There are some Prophecies indeed in Scripture, which seem to concern them: St. *John* and St. *Paul* have spoken many things concerning Antichrist and the Man of Sin, which many think are clearly applicable to the *Roman* Church. But I know she will say concerning these, as *Ahab* of *Micaiah*; *I hate these men, for they Prophecy not good, but evil concerning me.*

3. Can they attest the truth of their Doctrine by Miracles? Here I know they will make their boasts? There is not a Saint among them, but is famous for incredible wonders. The Apostles were but puny Miracle-workers, in comparison of their Modern Saints. And the great St. *Francis*, St. *Bridget*, St. *Catharine*, and St. *Thomas* of *Canterbury*, far exceeded St. *Peter*, or St. *James*, or St. *John*, or any of the other Disciples. Who can question the lawfulness of Worshipping the Virgin *Mary*, when he hears, that the Angels brought wood and stone cross the Sea to *Loretto*, and built her a Chap-

a Chappel there? Who can forbear falling proſtrate, and crying, St. *Thomas* help me, when thoſe very words from the mouth of a Sparrow, ſtruck a cruel Sparrow-hawk dead, that had almoſt faſtned upon her as his prey? Have not the wild beaſts of the wood fallen down before the Hoſt, when caſually let fall, and the very Aſſes caſt themſelves into a worſhipping poſture? And is it not mighty ſtrange, that men will ſtill truſt their own ſenſes, and remain Hereticks after ſuch wonderful evidence? I might inſtance in manyother pretty tales out of their Legends; but they are ſo ridiculous and extravagant, as plainly ſpeak out their forgery: and the wiſer among them are forc'd to confeſs them Pious Frauds, and Godly Cheats. Our Saviour and his Apoſtles did their mighty works openly in the ſight of their greateſt enemies. But theſe are all tranſacted in corners, before friends, and thoſe that have already entertain'd their doctrines. And ſurely there muſt be ſome *Leger demain* in the buſineſs, that ſo many Miracles ſhould be done in *Italy* and *Spain*, and none in *England*. But the true reaſon why they can do no mighty works in our Country, is becauſe of our unbelief. Proteſtants would ſoon diſcover their cheats; and they were

once ſo baffled in that intended miracle of the Boy of *Bilſon* (a known ſtory) that they have hardly ventur'd the expoſing themſelves ſince. Their Miracles, when they are not plain forgeries, are either the curing of melancholly fumes, or Hyſterical-Diſtempers, which frequently create fancies in perſons, as if they were poſſeſs'd: of which inſtances have been given by Proteſtants (particularly, as I remember, by Mr. *Baxter*) who have cur'd ſuch, and might have gain'd the name of Miracle-workers as well as they. Or if any of their *Indian* Apoſtles, as *Xavier*, and had a true miraculous power, it was to confirm the truth of Chriſtianity to the Heathens; and not their additional corruptions. Finally, if God do permit them to do ſome ſtrange unaccountable actions, to confirm their errors, 'tis but as a trial to our faith, to ſee whether we will forſake the true Doctrine confirm'd by greater miracles, when we are fore-arm'd againſt ſuch aſſaults, by being told, that Antichriſt ſhall come with lying wonders: and we need not fear the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, if we ſay, that by *Beelzebub* do theſe men caſt out Devils. But I had almoſt forgot one great Miracle, which is daily perform'd: and that is Tranſubſtantiation;

But

But those who believe this, must live by faith, or rather unreasonable credulity, and not by sight. And the greatest Miracle of all is, That men who are Wise and Rational enough in common matters, should swallow such an heap of Contradictions. And thus have I made good the Charge against the *Romish* Church in the first Sense; and tho much more might have been said; yet this fully proves that they have corrupted Christianity with their impure mixtures, and cover'd the excellent Foundations of our Faith, with the Hay and Stubble of their own Inventions. And thus I proceed to make good the Charge against them in the second Sense.

2. *Whether they have disturb'd the World by Principles of Religion.* This hath been so common a *Theme* of late years, that I need not spend much time in proving it. The Miter is by them exalted above the Crown; and *Peter*'s pretended Successor is so far from Preaching up his Doctrine of Subjection to the Civil Powers, that he requires Kings and Emperors to stoop to him. I need not laboriously prove this, by Quotations out of their Authors.

If

If the Decrees of their Councils, the Bulls of their Popes, the Determinations of their Canon-Law, the Assertions of not only Jesuits (those known Enemies to Monarchy) but of the most approv'd Doctors of all Orders among them, may be taken to be the Sense of their Church, the Learned Bp. of *Lincoln*, hath lately Collected them together; and thereby fully confirm'd the Title of his Book, That Popish Principles are destructive to Protestant Princes. There we may find such dangerous Assertions as these, *That Emperors and Kings are the Popes Subjects; That they may be depos'd by him for Schism, Heresie, Lasiness, or unprofitableness; and that he is the sole Judg of the Crime and Condemnation. That Statutes made by Laymen bind not the Clergy. That the Pope is the Vicar of God, and every creature is subject to him. That he that prefers the King before the Priest, prefers the Creature before the Creator.* In a word, He hath given such convincing Demonstration, That King-killing Doctrines are authoriz'd at *Rome*, that we may justly wonder at the daring-Impudence of the late *Tyburn*-Saint, who pretended that none but *Mariana* ever publish'd such Doctrines. But what truth can be so plain, which the Confidence of a Jesuit dare not deny?

Neither

Neither have these been the idle Speculations of the Schools, or the entertainment of the Cells and Cloysters; but have been practically maintain'd many hundred Years, and the History of the Church for some Centuries is nothing else but a Tragical and Bloody Comment on this Doctrine. 'Tis hardly possible to mention one King (since *Rome*'s rise to her greatness) that hath been but coldly affected to the Catholick Cause, who hath not been scar'd by the Thunders of the Pope, and Rebellions of his Subjects.

I might instance in the *Fredericks*, and *Henry*'s of *Germany*, who were haras's'd with continual Civil Wars and Confusion; in the two *Henry*'s of *France*, one whereof (*Henry* the third) was Murder'd by *Jaque Clement*, and the act commended in a set Oration, by Pope *Sixtus quintus*, and that execrable Murder compar'd to the Incarnation and Resurrection of our Lord; and the Virtue and Courage of the Fryer, to that of *Judith* and *Eleazer*. The other (*Henry* the 4*th*) was as barbariously Assassinated by *Ravilliac*. But I shall confine my self to our own Land, and briefly show how these men have turn'd our *English* World upside down. Here I might instance

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in King *Henry* the 2*d*, and King *John*, who were both ſcar'd by the Popes Thunderbolts into mean Submiſſions, below the Dignity of Crowned heads, and the latter at laſt poyſon'd by a fawning Monk. But I ſhall only mention their villanous Practices, ſince the beginning of the Reformation; When King *Henry* the 8*th* firſt renounc'd the Popes Supremacy, Pope *Paul* the 3*d* Curſes and Damns that King, and his Parliament, Cites them to appear before him in ſixty Days; and upon their refuſal, ratifies this Excommunication; Prohibits them any Chriſtian Burial, and declares them eternally Damn'd; deprives that King of all his Dignities, and commands his Subjects to take up Arms, and compel him to Repeal the Law he had made. When Queen *Elizabeth* came to the Crown, 'tis well known, how Pope *Pius* the 5*th* depoſed her; and the Northern Rebellion, and many ſecret Plots by Poyſon, Gun-powder, *&c.* are to be read in our Chronicles; but when theſe deſigns prov'd unſucceſful, Pope *Sixtus quintus*, Publiſhes a *Croiſade* againſt her, and perſwades King *Philip* to War againſt her, and crowns his Fleet with the Title of the *Invincible Armado*; but the immediate hand of Heaven diſpers'd their Ships

Ships by Tempeſt, and thus confuted their proud conceits, and gave a Demonſtration to the World, that infallibility dwelt not at *Rome*; which made the *Spaniſh* Admiral ſwear, he thought Jeſus Chriſt was turn'd *Lutheran*; but the *Spaniſh* King ſaid more ſoberly, *He ſent his Navy to fight againſt men, and not againſt God, to whoſe immediate Providence he attributed that Defeat.* After That Queen's Death, they us'd many Artifices to prevent King *James* his coming to the Crown. Pope *Clement* the 8*th* ſent two Breivs into *England*, one to the Clergy, and another to the Laity, not to ſuffer any but a Catholick, tho never ſo near in Blood, to Succeed; and Father *Parſons* writ a Book to invalidate his Title, tho they had before Proclaim'd *Mary* Queen of *Scots*, the lawful Heir to the Kingdom. But when theſe attempts met not with their deſir'd Succeſs, they enter'd into that black unheard-of Conſpiracy of the Powder-Treaſon; and tho now they pretend this was only a Plot of *Cecil*'s, to render them odious; yet we have full Confirmation of their Guilt, and may be aſſur'd the Pope would have reſented the welcome News of this Iſlands Reduction, tho by ſo bloody a means, to the *Romiſh* See, with as much joy as he ſince did the hopes

hopes of rooting out this Northern Hereſie, when he *wept for joy*. And the *5th* of *November* would have been as great a Feſtival in their *Calender*, as now it is in ours. Nor were they leſs reſtleſs in their deſigns againſt King *Charles* the I. 'Tis well known how they deſign'd to Murder that King, which was diſcover'd to Sir *William Boſwel* at the *Hague*. They fomented our differences, inflam'd the Spirits of men, and (acting their parts in ſeveral Diſguiſes) were the great Authors of our Civil Broils and Confuſions. When that King was Impriſon'd by his unnatural Subjects, 'tis now publiſh'd to the World *, how a conſult of Prieſts and Jeſuits met at *London*, and in a Letter to the Drs. of the *Sorbon* at *Paris*, ſent this Queſtion, *viz. Whether conſidering the preſent poſture of Affairs, it were for the intereſt of the Catholick Cauſe to cut off that King, who remain'd obſtinate in his Hereſie?* It was anſwer'd in the affirmitive, and reſolv'd at *Rome* by the Pope and his Council, *That it was not only Lawful, but Expedient.* It cannot be deni'd, that too many profeſs'd Proteſtants did ingage in that barbarous Villany; but they had ſuck'd theſe

* *See this and more inſtances in* Dumoulins *Anſwer to* Phil. Ang.

these poysonous Principles, not from any Protestant Confessions of Faith, but *Romish* Canons and Decrees. Protestants disown such Principles; 'tis therefore an unreasonable thing to accuse the whole Party, because of some Delinquents. But such Practices are authoriz'd and encourag'd by Popish Councils, as agreeable to their Religion. We may be assur'd, the Ax that cut off our Sovereigns head, was whetted among the *Romish Philistines*; and whatever *spurious Protestants* join'd in that, or in any Treasons of the like nature since that time, they were so far Papist, and belong not to us, but them. 'Twill but be needless labour to mention their secret Conspiracies under our present Sovereign; the World hath been so fully inform'd about them. And I hope there is as little necessity of proving, that such Practices are disown'd by the Christian Religion. For, must we *pay unto Cesar, the things that are Cesars?* And is Rebellion and Treason, the Tribute we owe him? Must every Soul be subject to the higher Powers? And are Plots and Conspiracies the best Testimonies of our Allegiance? Are Consecrated Knives and Daggers, any of our Gospel-Artillery? and these Instruments of Death, our Weapons of Righteousness? Surely that Religion

ligion that thus practically own Rebellions, is far different from what it was in the Apoſtles days, and it will be no Slander for us to ſay, *Theſe are the men that have turned the world upſide down.* I now proceed to conſider,

IV. *What uſeful Inferences may be gather'd from our paſt Diſcourſe?*

1. Hence we may ſee the excellence of the Proteſtant Religion. The Scripture is the ſole Rule of our Faith and Manners; pure and uncorrupted Chriſtianity reformed from the abuſive Additions of the *Romiſh* Church, is our Religion. We profeſs to own nothing as part of it, but what is (as to the eſſentials) ſummarily contain'd in the Baptiſmal Covenant, and more explicitely in the Creed, Lords Prayer, and ten Commandments, and (as to the Integrals) in the *Old* and *New Teſtament.*

So that whatever is ſaid in the former part of this Diſcourſe, to prove the excellence of the Chriſtian Inſtitution, doth equally confirm the excellence of the Proteſtant Faith, which is the very ſame with naked Chriſtianity. We believe the incomprehenſibility and ſpirituality of Gods Nature,

ture, and dare not entertain any Images of him, no not in our very Imaginations. Angels we Reverence as nobler and more excellent Beings than our ſelves; but dare not pay them that Adoration which the Jealous God will not give to another. The Virgin *Mary* we account bleſſed among Women, but dare not exalt her into the Throne of her Son, nor blaſphemouſly aſcribe Divine Prerogatives to her. The Holy Saints departed, we reſpectfully remember, and deſire to imitate them as they follow'd Chriſt; but dare not pray unto them, as if they were Omniſcient; nor give thoſe Services to them, which are appropriated to God and the Lord Jeſus. The Holy Sacrament we joyfully Celebrate, as a Seal of our Saviours tender Affection: But dare not Worſhip the Bread, *but eat it in remembrance of* him. We Worſhip God with the moſt comely outward Poſtures, and eſpecially with ſincere and ſpiritual Affection; but have no occaſion for the fooliſh Charms of the Heathens, or burdenſome Rites of the *Jews*. Our Lord Jeſus we acknowledg as our only Univerſal King and Sovereign; and whoever ſhall boldly alter his Laws, or invade his Prerogative, ſhall be rejected by us as an Uſurper. He is our only High Prieſt and Inter-

ceſſor; and let other men talk at what vain rates they will, we are better acquainted with our own Infirmities, than to plead any merit of our own. Through his Blood alone we hope for Salvation; and let others truſt in the merits of Saints, the Omnipotent vertue of Medals and Relicks, and priviledg'd Altars, and ſuch like hallow'd Baubles: We will depend on nothing but his meritorious Sacrifice; leſt, when it is too late, we meet with a ſhameful diſappointment, and paſs out of this World, not into a temporary Purgatory, but an eternal Hell. Chriſts Prophetical Office we own, and reſolve to adjuſt our lives according to the Laws of the Goſpel. We teach the People to Study the Scripture daily, and to examine all our Doctrines by the Touchſtone of the Word. We acknowledg our ſelves to be fallible men, and ſhould very gladly return to the boſome of that Church that is really indued with a Spirit of Infallibility; but deſire better proofs, than thoſe vain and idle ones we have hitherto heard of. The Holy Laws of the Goſpel are our ſtanding-Rule; and tho others vainly diſtinguiſh away their Duty, we will keep cloſe to theſe commands. Piety, Juſtice, and Charity, in their fulleſt extent, we own to be our unqueſtionable

queſtionable Duty, without thoſe corrupting Gloſſes and Reſtrictions which ſome have invented. True uniform ſelf-denial, is acknowledg'd as abſolutely neceſſary, and we place it not in uncommanded Auſterities; but in mortifying our Luſts, and ſubduing whatever oppoſes the Glory of God, or our own Salvation. True undiſſembled Loyalty we acknowledg'd as our Duty: Religion and Loyalty go hand in hand in our Conſtitutions; theſe are our Principles; and oh, that our Practices were univerſally like them. If we did but univerſally live up to the excellent Principles we maintain, our Examples would be convincing, give ſuch a lovely Deſcription of our Religion, as would attract the Eyes, and convert the hearts of the *Romaniſts*, and more ſucceſsfully ſerve the Proteſtant intereſt, than all the Arguments in our Books. This leads to,

2. Let our lives be agreeable to the Rules of our Religion. Let every one that pretends to Reformed Chriſtianity, live a reformed Life. Let not Religion only mend our heads, but our hearts too; and not only rectifie the errors and miſtakes of our Minds, but alſo the miſcarriages and offences of our Lives. For a profeſſed Proteſtant to lead

a vicious life, is much more unbecoming and dangerous, than for those who hope to be saved at an easier rate, and own a more loose Religion. Tho we do know our Duty, except we practice it, we cannot be happy. Let me intreat you therefore, if you have any concern for your selves, and your own interest; if you would not be accounted perjur'd Persons, take heed how you contradict your Baptismal Vows, and many repeated Engagements to forsake the World, and Flesh, and Devil. If you would not lye under the Imputation of the most dangerous hypocrisie or unbelief, forbear those Sins which are displeasing to God, and forbidden by your Religion. Not to believe the Christian, or (which is the same) the Protestant Religion, after such full Confirmation, is certainly very unreasonable; but to believe it to be true, and yet to live as if it were false, is the greatest Contradiction and Repugnancy imaginable. Do not you profess to believe, That *without holiness, no man shall see the Lord*; and yet will you venture to continue in a sinful course? Do you believe that every wilful Sinner shall be doom'd to Hell, and

and all the Prayers and Tears of the holieſt men on Earth, can never fetch them thence; and yet will you continue in a ſtate of reſolved impenitence? If you would not therefore that the Articles of your Faith ſhould be ſo many Articles of Accuſation againſt you at the great day, let your knowledg be improv'd into a Religious practice, and not only tend to aggravate your future miſery. Further, if you have any concern for the Religion you profeſs, and would not it ſhould be ſcandaliz'd as an encouragement to wickedneſs; Now break off your Sins by Repentance and Amendment of Life; by our impure lives, we take the moſt effectual courſe in the World to bring our Religion it ſelf into diſgrace; and do more prejudice to the Proteſtant Intereſt, than we can poſſibly advance it by our Arguments. I could therefore almoſt wiſh, That men would either diſown their Sins, or their Profeſſion; openly renounce their Religion, or ſtrictly comply with its commands; and if they will not be ſo generous as to follow its Directions, they would at leaſt be ſo honeſt, as to

quit their claim, rather than ſtill to retain it, only the more effectually to diſgrace the Religion they profeſs. Let thoſe that know no better, allow themſelves in ſin and wickedneſs; but let us that diſown their principles, abhor their lives too. Our God will not indulge us in wickedneſs; nor can we expect any diſpenſation *from Heaven* for our debaucheries and prophaneneſs; nay, further, if we would not provoke God to leave us, and ſuffer our ſubtil enemies to eſtabliſh their impure Doctrines, let us not imitate them in ſin: For if we become followers of their example, God may in juſt judgment make them Lords of our Faith alſo. In a word, (to conclude with the expreſſions of an excellent perſon) we have the beſt and holieſt, the wiſeſt and moſt reaſonable Religion in the World: but then we are in the worſt condition of all mankind, if the beſt Religion in the World do not make us good.

3. Let us not by our diviſions let in our common enemy. Our feuds and animoſities, and intemperate heats among our ſelves,

ſelves, are the ready way to bring in Popery into our Land. By our Diviſions we weaken our own Intereſt, imploy our pains and abilities in quarrelling about trifles, and diſable our ſelves in a great meaſure from preventing the growth and increaſe of the *Romiſh* Religion. By our Diviſions we expoſe our ſelves to the United Power of our Common Adverſaries; and like the unhappy *Jews* of old, we are ſquabling among our ſelves, while the *Romans* are ready to enter in upon us at thoſe wide breaches we have made for them. By our Diviſions, we become acceſſary to our own ruin; and have great reaſon to fear, leſt we do that with our own hands, which all the Policies of *Rome* have not hitherto been able to effect. By our Diviſions we may provoke God to ſuffer our enemies to prevail; and by fiery trials to ſcourge us into Love and Unity. Then we ſhall too late repent of our violence and bitterneſs: And when we ſadly look back, and reflect how happy once we might have been, this will be no mean aggravation of our miſery. And when we remember we brought our afflictions upon our ſelves, we ſhall have cauſe to

ſay, with ſad hearts; and tears in our eyes: *Oh that we had known the things that belong to our Peace.* Let us now therefore be intreated to lay aſide prejudice and paſſion, and have greater regard to the common good, than the intereſt of any particular Party. Let us more impartially weigh the differences among our ſelves, and reſolve that nothing but ſin ſhall hinder a full agreement; And by mutual compliances 'tis no impoſſible thing to be reconcil'd: But if that be too great a bleſſing for ſuch a ſinful People, and there muſt be differences among us, Oh that we could once learn to differ in judgment, without any alienation of affections. That we could once learn, that the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, conſiſts not in ſuch little things as are the matters of our difference; But in Righteouneſs and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt. And he that leads an holy Life, ſhall be accepted by God, tho he worſhip not him after our particular mode, and prehaps be guilty of ſome miſtakes. Are not our differences much of the ſame nature with thoſe St. *Paul* mentions, *Rom.* 14. And why ſhould not his directi-

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ons be carefully obſerv'd? Why ſhould we aggravate every little difference, or heighten every ſmall miſtake, or cenſoriouſly condemn one another as Hypocrites, becauſe (tho we agree in all the ſubſtantials of Religion) we cannot be all of a mind, in ſome particular forms, and modes, and ceremonies? Are not we all fallible creatures? and ſhall we be angry at our brethren for that which is the common condition of Men? May not the error be on our own ſide as well as our Brothers? And is this becoming a Chriſtian, or an ingenuous man, to condemn another for that wherein perhaps I may be guilty my ſelf? We cannot gratify the Papiſts more, than by theſe unhappy diſputes. Let us therefore by the friendſhip we bear to the Proteſtant Intereſt, by the concern we have for our Religion, and juſt hatred we bear to the *Romiſh* Faith, be perſwaded, either wholly to lay aſide, or at leaſt to be more moderate and calm in our differences. Let us labour after Healing, Uniting Spirits; imploy our zeal about the great Duties of Religion; ſtrive which ſhall be the beſt Chriſtians and the beſt Subjects; and leave the

Diſputes

Diſputes about leſſer things, to thoſe who know not how better to imploy their time: Then we need not fear the attempts of our enemies: And as God hath hitherto, ſo we may hope he will ſtill be our great defender. But (as one ſays very well) till we are as zealous againſt the Antichriſts in our own breaſts, as Pride, Anger, Malice, and Bitterneſs, as againſt him that ſits in the *Roman* Chair, and learn heartily to love one another, we have little reaſon to hope with *Agag*, that the bitterneſs of Death is paſt: but have too much cauſe to dread the *Romiſh* Yoak.

4. Let us never Apoſtatize to the *Romiſh* Religion. A Religion which perfectly overturns Chriſtianity, and abſolutely overthrows all Civil Government. A Religion which deſtroys our duty to our Heavenly, and diſſolves our obligation to our Earthly Sovereign. A Religion that takes away that fear of God which Chriſtianity obliges us to; and denies that honour to the King which the Law of Nature and the Light of Revelation binds upon us.

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If we would perform a more reaſonable ſervice than Heathens offer, let us not return to the ſorceries and charms of *Rome*. If we have any reſpect to the Commands of God, or dread Divine threatnings, let us not deny him that Spiritual Worſhip he reqüires, nor fall down before Graven Images; Except we can be content with a Catechiſm without the Second Commandment; a Sacrament without the Cup; and a Bible which we cannot underſtand. Except we will Worſhip we know not what; Pray unto thoſe that cannot hear us; and truſt in thoſe that cannot help us. Except we can be content with a Faith without knowledg; a Hope without foundation; and a Charity that damns all the World but our ſelves: Till we can be perſwaded, That there may be Devotion without underſtanding; Repentance without amendment; and Salvation without any labour or great induſtry to obtain it: Till we can be ſatisfi'd in theſe and all the other particulars I have mention'd, we cannot be thorow Papiſts. And if theſe things are not prejudice enough againſt that Church, it's a ſign we little underſtand what Religion means.

means. Let us therefore ſeriouſly reflect on theſe particulars, that our abhorrence of Popery may not meerly be, becauſe we were educated in the Proteſtant Faith, and 'tis a faſhionable thing to rail againſt the Church of *Rome*; but it may be eſtabliſh'd upon firm and ſtable principles, ſuch as may endure a ſtorm and fiery trial, which (God knows) whether we may not be viſited with. That we may never run ſuch hazards of our Salvation, as we ſhall incur if we Apoſtatize to that Church. For how far the depths of Gods mercy may reach, and his ſovereign goodneſs may ſave a Natural Born Papiſt, I know not; how far their ignorance and prejudice may excuſe them, is not for me to diſpute: But this I will ſay, If any who have been educated in the Proteſtant Faith, and well underſtood the Grounds of that Religion, ſhall turn Papiſt, he muſt have a great meaſure of charity who can think ſuch an one in any near probability of Salvation. Let us therefore hold faſt our Religion, and ſtrictly comply with its excellent commands; let our profeſſions be ſincere, and our lives obedient; then, tho our enemies do plot

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our ruin, the God of Heaven will appear on our side; and his never-slumbring Providence defeat their designs. *Tho these who have turn'd the world upside down should come hither*, yet their policies shall not prevail; But only give fresh occasion to us to glorify God the Author of our Deliverance.

FINIS.

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